

APPENDIX IV

TAB CC

BIOLOGY DEBATE

Ruling lauded in Dover

Both sides say Ga.
decision aids case

By HEIDI BERNHARD-BUEB

For The York Dispatch

Attorneys representing both sides in the lawsuit against the Dover School District over its biology curriculum say their cases will be strengthened by a federal judge's decision yesterday in an education case in Georgia.

Opponents of the curriculum call it a helpful precedent, while proponents of it say the judge addressed evolution, not intelligent design — a theory that attributes the origin of life to an intelligent being.

In Georgia, U.S. District Judge Clarence Cooper ruled that stickers marking both school biology textbooks calling evolution a theory and a fact were an unconstitutional endorsement of religion. He ordered them removed.

Dover County, Ga., school officials said the stickers in the books are years ago. They read: "This textbook contains material on



DOVER

■ Group objects to board's public display policy

Page A9

[illegible]

Police chase ends in jail

With DUI case
inst driver

ZABETH EVANS

Dispatch

Mechanicsburg man
pleaded guilty to drunk-
driving five times in 13
— and either resisted
or fled police in four of
cases — is back in

Art H. Sparks Jr. is ac-
cused of leading police on an
all-out chase that put
two officers in danger
of their lives.

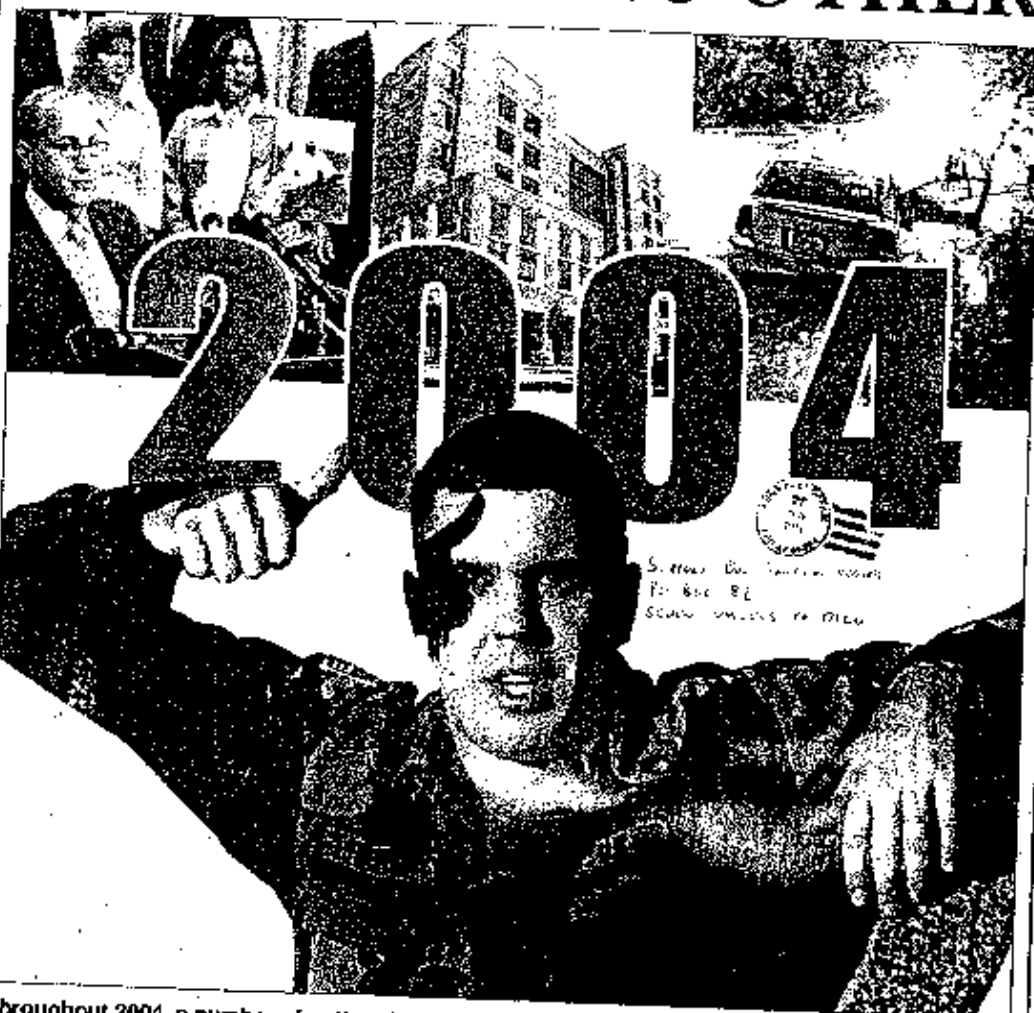
Sparks, 35, of York
County, Regional Patrolman
Ryan Wulak, escaped seri-
ous injury despite jumping
out of the pickup
truck which kept going even
after Wulak leaped in
the back window
and allegedly punched
Sparks.

The chase
ended at York
County
Prison, where
Sparks
stopped,
police said.

"He pulled
right up to
the entrance
gate," Sgt.
Rod Varner

which point a prison
guard asked, via inter-
com, "I help you?"

A YEAR LIKE NO OTHER



Throughout 2004, a number of national issues resonated through York County. From the local impact of the war in Iraq, to debates over the proper use of eminent domain, to differing interpretations of separation of church and state, national issues hit home, and sometimes what happened in York made national as well as local headlines.

■ **UPPER LEFT:** The teaching of intelligent design theory at Dover Area High school was among the issues that drew the national media to York. Earlier this month, attorney Eric Rothschild and 11 parents announced a lawsuit against the district in Harrisburg.

■ **LOWER PHOTO:** The war in Iraq was felt throughout York as soldiers, such as Sgt. Eric Fetters of Manchester Township, were called to duty, and five servicemen with York County ties were killed. Meanwhile, at home, a group called SOAR helped support the troops.

Other issues were more local in focus:

■ **UPPER CENTER:** The county opened its new judicial center downtown.

■ **UPPER RIGHT:** Runoff from heavy rains on Mother's Day brought flash flooding that killed a woman and her young daughter. For a look back at the year, see Pages A6-9.

P 00775

missioner Doug Kilgore would just totally follow her every step of the way," Chronister said.

They ended their first year in office by raising property taxes by 7 percent and creating a new library tax, to ensure library funding grows as the county does — with Chronister opposed.

A park at Lauxmont?

One of the most controversial issues in York County this year was the effort by county commissioners Lori Mitrick and Doug Kilgore to turn 915 undeveloped acres in Lower Windsor Township into a public park overlooking the Susquehanna River.

Called the Susquehanna Riverlands Preservation Project, it has the backing of the Lancaster-York Heritage Region Board and the York County Farm and Natural Lands Trust. It would contain a welcome center, preserved farmland and an American Indian museum and education center, focused on a site that may have been the last Susquehannock Indian village.

So far, it has received a \$1 million, two-year commitment from the state, in part because the commissioners in May moved to take, by eminent domain, the Highpoint tract, owned by Columbia builder Peter Alcocch.

Since then, opposition to the project has mounted. Local and national Realtors' groups have come to Alcocch's defense, as he had already received permission to develop the site, and the land-taking is tied up in court.

Also in bitter negotiations with the county is the Kohr family, which owns Lauxmont Farms. The farm contains the bulk of the land proposed for the project. And there's been no word on where the

commissioners tried to halt what seemed like a never-ending avalanche of change orders, but even today, extra costs associated with the building continue to roll in.

Meanwhile, the 2005 county budget includes higher costs for the sheriff's office, administration and facilities management because of additional staffing and higher-than-expected operational costs of the new judicial center.

Dover in the spotlight

From National Public Radio to the TV show "Nightline," crews from the national media began descending on the Dover area toward the end of the year.

They were reporting on a controversy over the teaching of intelligent design in high school biology courses, as approved by the school board in October.

The debate began last June, when a new biology textbook, the 2004 edition of "Prentice Hall Biology," was up for approval.

The book offended some board members because it teaches the theory of evolution without reference to creationism — although in 1987 the U.S. Supreme Court prohibited the teaching of creationism in public schools.

A divided board approved the book, but some members called for an alternative theory to be taught alongside evolution. A proponent of the intelligent design theory, which attributes the origin of life to an "intelligent being," donated 60 copies of the book "Of Pandas and People" to the district.

In October, the board voted to add a statement to the curriculum that says there are gaps in Darwin's theory of evolution, and students should be made aware of



YORK DISPATCH FILE PHOTO

A massive storm dumped rain on the Felton area on Mother's Day. The resulting flood killed a mother and her daughter and caused millions of dollars in damage. Above, Bud Black works to remove mud from his mother's house.

other theories, including intelligent design. They then issued a statement they wanted teachers to read in biology class.

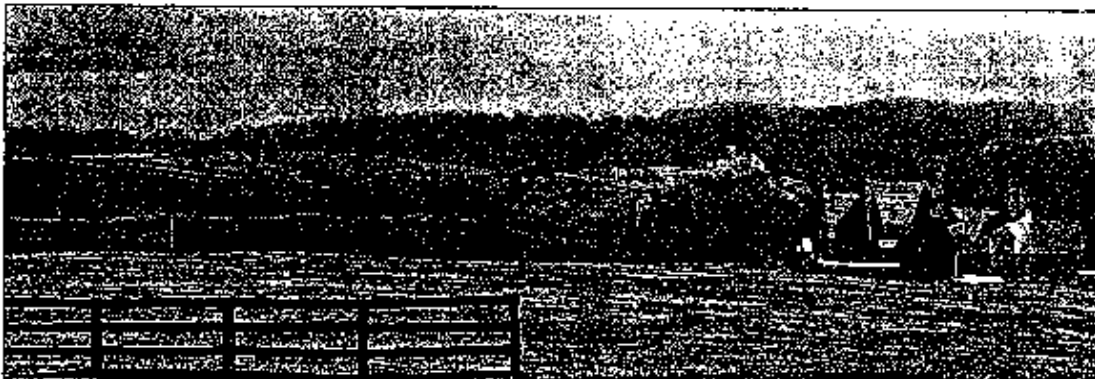
Three board members — Jeff and Casey Brown, and Angie Ziegler-Yingling — resigned.

On Dec. 14, 11 parents joined with the American Civil Liberties Union, Americans United for the Separation of Church and State and a Philadelphia law firm to sue the district and its board.

Parents said the board's intention was religious and violates their children's civil liberties.

A federal judge said the parents' attorneys have until Jan. 5 — about two weeks before the classes would begin — to decide whether to seek a restraining order barring the district from offering the curriculum.

And the case wasn't the only church vs. state controversy in the county in 2004. Hanover officials got a judge's permission to sell a sliver of Wirt Park, containing a decades-old Ten Commandments monument, after Americans United for the Separation of Church and State objected to its presence.



YORK DISPATCH FILE PHOTO

Criticism and praise swirled around the county's plans to obtain Lauxmont Farms for a new park.

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Faith & Values

CREATIONISM EVOLVES

MARY WARNER

Of The Patriot-News

1,321 words

4 April 2003

The Harrisburg Patriot

FINAL

E01

English

(Copyright 2003)

More than 75 years since evolutionists and creationists sparred in the legendary Scopes trial, their dispute is still not laid to rest.

New statewide teaching standards in recent years have secured evolution's place in biology class -- but only after battles in state after state, including Pennsylvania.

Meanwhile, in some small school districts -- Annville-Cleona is the prime local example -- Christian conservatives still challenge evolution, with varying success.

About 55 percent of Americans in a 2001 Gallup poll proclaimed belief in evolution -- the scientific theory that says all living things evolved through natural processes from common ancestry over millions of years.

The rest agreed that "God created human beings pretty much in their present form at one time within the last 10,000 years or so."

The disconnect between public education and popular belief will keep the controversy alive in courts, legislatures and school board meetings "well into the new century," says historian Edward Larson.

Larson, whose "Trial and Error: The American Controversy over Creation and Evolution" is now in its third edition, described the ongoing battle recently for about 20 people in Harrisburg.

Legislators, pastors, lawyers, school board members, a geologist, a deacon -- gathered at Grace United Methodist Church for a session sponsored by Messiah College in Grantham.

Ted Davis, professor of the history of science at the Christian college, says he hopes to arrange more speakers and conversations for local people interested in the nexus of science and religion.

He is dismayed, he says, when science "becomes a weapon in the culture wars."

It's been more than three decades since the Supreme Court said public schools cannot be barred from teaching evolution. Creationists fighting for equal time in science classes lost in court 16 years ago.

But homeschooling, Christian radio and fundamentalist academies have kept "creation science" alive and even flourishing, Larson says.

So some kids still are learning that the earth is young and dinosaurs roamed the same ground with humans -- scenarios that are in accord with literal readings of the Bible.

Ken Ham, whose "Answers In Genesis" ministry is on the Internet and the radio, has raised money around the country for a Creation Museum, now under construction near Cincinnati.

Incensed at the creationists, some popular science writers have taken aim at religion: Richard Dawkins and Dan Dennett assert that evolution shows God is a myth.

The National Academy of Scientists has tried to soothe feelings by insisting science is "neutral" -- not hostile -- to the existence of God. Still, positions have hardened.

Now, anti-evolutionists are rallying around "intelligent design" - presented as science, not religion, and therefore fit for public school science classes.

Recently advanced by some scientists but rejected by the mainstream, the theory says the complexity of living structures is scientific evidence of an intelligent designer.

So far, efforts to mandate intelligent design teaching through statewide education standards have been largely unsuccessful, Larson says. And every state says students need some familiarity with evolution. Purposefulness to the universe

Most Americans who believe in evolution also believe the process is divinely ordained, Gallup reports. That includes the Rev. Jim Brown of Market Square Presbyterian Church in Harrisburg. "I believe that there is a purposefulness to the universe that Einstein and others have come up against. It's mystery, but it's there," Brown says. He's also "personally very comfortable" with evolution and does not support the intelligent design movement.

"I'm not unsympathetic with the attempt to hold on to biblical truths," Brown says. "But to try to impose scientific understanding in order to do that -- I don't think it works very well."

But the Rev. William McEllroy Jr. of St. John's Evangelical Congregational Church in Annville finds the idea of human evolution morally offensive.

And it's thinking like McEllroy's -- the biblical literalism of the Protestant fundamentalist church -- that remains "the bedrock for anti-evolutionism in the United States," Larson says.

To McEllroy's mind, evolution might explain changes over time in the characteristics of golden retrievers, for example, but has nothing to do with the diversity of life on earth or with human origins.

Those explanations are found in God, who created everything in six 24-hour days, just as the Bible says, only a few thousand years ago, McEllroy says.

"Evolution is going eventually to be found to be the falsity that it is," he predicts. "There are a lot of scientists who are not evolutionists, and they are being excluded from the mainstream."

He says he learns about those controversies from "Answers In Genesis."

McEllroy supports the teaching of intelligent design, even though it's "a bit deficient," he says. It's "certainly a positive step up from evolution." Political tool

Proponents of intelligent design insist that high schools should "teach the controversy" about evolution.

But just how much controversy is there?

"What they mean by that is 'teaching the theory as though it were not very well established,'" while most scientists think it is, Davis says. "I would say there isn't any controversy, or at least very little."

People who don't like evolution are seizing on scientific debates about how it works and then presenting them as attacks on the basic concept, Davis says.

As a Christian, who believes both in God and in evolution, Davis declares himself sympathetic in some ways to intelligent design - but concerned that it has become a political tool.

The best-known and best-funded of the proponents of intelligent design is the Seattle-based Discovery Institute, which also promotes a variety of conservative causes.

Perhaps the best-known of the movement's scientists is Michael Behe, a biochemistry professor at Lehigh University who graduated from Harrisburg's Bishop McDevitt High School in 1969.

Behe has no basic quarrel with evolution; he is satisfied that living things evolved from common ancestors -- an idea that is anathema to many now pushing for the teaching of intelligent design in public schools.

But Behe says Darwin's description of how evolution happens -- natural selection among random mutations -- cannot explain the complexity he observes as a biochemist. Intelligent design is the only adequate explanation, he says.

The consensus of his fellow scientists is negative.

The American Association for the Advancement of Science declared last year that intelligent design is about religion, not science, and doesn't belong in science class. Uphill battle

Annville-Cleona School Board meetings have repeatedly been the scene of clashes over evolution. A seventh-grade science course that covered evolution was approved 6-3 in 1999, over the objections of conservative Christians on the board.

Last summer, the board nixed a reading text that mentioned evolution in ways some members found too assertive.

Elsewhere in the midstate, though, things have been relatively quiet since the mid-'90s.

The Elizabethtown Area School Board in 1997 slapped a disclaimer on a seventh-grade science book, to assert that some ideas in evolution "have not been conclusively proven."

The texts have since been changed. The new ones also teach evolution, which has since been enshrined in the statewide standards. And there's no disclaimer.

Two years ago, U.S. Sen. Rick Santorum, R-Pa., sponsored a resolution saying biology teachers should help students understand the "continuing controversy" over evolution.

The presidents of 80 scientific societies fired off a letter telling Congress that, among scientists, there is no controversy. Santorum's language ended up in a nonbinding report from a conference committee.

Ant-evolutionists face a decidedly uphill battle in the face of the state standards, the basis for student achievement tests, Larson says.

Still, he predicts a continuing "low-level controversy, resulting in a sort of low level of evolution education" -- along with more home-schooling and more fundamentalist high schools. MARY WARNER: 255-8267 or mwarner@patriot-news.com

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York Dispatch, The (PA)

June 8, 2004

Section: TOP STORIES

Dover debates evolution in biology text

Book on hold because it doesn't address creationism

Author: *HEIDI BERNHARD-BUBB For The York Dispatch Did human beings descend from apes? Some members of the Dover Area School Board don't think so and want to make sure the high school biology curriculum teaches more than evolution. William Buck*

Article Text:

In 1987, the U.S. Supreme Court rejected the teaching of creationism in public schools as a violation of the separation of church and state.

And according to the Web site of the state chapter of the American Civil Liberties Union, Pennsylvania's new standards "do not include language that could have been interpreted as opening the door to the teaching of creationism." The standards, in fact, call for the teaching of evolution.

But Dover Area Superintendent Richard Nilsen said he is bound by state law to abide by the board's decision. He said the board votes on all textbooks and has the final say.

"The teachers cannot teach from a book that is not board-adopted," he said.

He said the district "will always look for textbooks that have a balanced approach to all topics."

When asked what that means for the evolution versus creationism debate, Nilsen said Dover will "present all options and theories."

ACLU staff attorney Paula Knudsen said the courts have "pretty well settled" the issue, so someone objecting to a textbook presenting creationism would have an "immediate ability to challenge (the) textbook" in federal court.

Districts can "use religion in the school setting to teach about literature, history, whatever, but when you're in the science forum, the case law is so clear it's probably a good idea for school districts not to use creationism at all, even if it's just a portion of a science textbook," Knudsen said.

Nilsen said he is not concerned about exposing the district to a possible lawsuit.

12/31/2004

Still looking: Board President Alan Bonsell said the board would look for a book that teachers and board members could approve, one that presents a fair and balanced approach.

A recommendation on the book will come from the curriculum committee, which also includes board members Sheila Harkins and Casey Brown.

Since last year when she was still a member of the board, Barrie Callahan has been questioning the board as to why the new book was not approved.

Buckingham said although the book had been available for review since May 2003, he had just recently reviewed the book himself and was disturbed the book was laced with Darwinism.

Resident Max Pell questioned whether the board should be teaching religion in school: "Creationism is a religious theory," he said. "Why does it have to be taught in biology class?"

Pell graduated from Dover High School in 2003 and just completed his freshman year as a biology major at Penn State University's main campus.

Opposes separation of church and state: **Buckingham** said he believes the separation of church and state is mythical and not something he supports.

Board member Jeff Brown said the entire board would make the final decision and the book has not been completely rejected.

Pell said he had no problem with **Buckingham's** views if they weren't presented in the school curriculum.

Also at issue is whether a book will be approved before the upcoming school year. Callahan said she was concerned that students would have an outdated textbook for another year.

Assistant Superintendent Michael Baksa said the district was planning to adopt a textbook before the start of the new school year.

He said that he would present options to the curriculum committee and give the committee more information about how the district teaches evolution and creationism. [Subscribe Now!](#)

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York Dispatch, The (PA)

June 9, 2004

Section: LOCAL NEWS

Group: Dover schools could face lawsuit

Says it's a textbook case of church, state separation

Author: HEIDI BERNHARD-BUBB For The York Dispatch

Article Text:

The quest of several Dover Area School Board members to find a high school biology textbook that teaches both evolution and creationism could put the district at odds with the U.S. Supreme Court and at risk of a lawsuit.

William Buckingham, a board member and head of the curriculum committee, said this week he was disturbed by a proposed high school biology textbook, the 2002 edition of Prentice Hall Biology, because it was laced with Darwinism.

Board member Noel Wenrich agreed.

The book was initially selected by the high school science department and district administration to replace the current textbook, which is six years old and out of date in some areas.

A recommendation on the book will come from the curriculum committee, which also includes board members Sheila Harkins and Casey Brown. Buckingham said the committee would look for a book that presented both creationism and evolution.

However, teaching creationism may get the district in trouble.

Robert Boston, spokesman for Americans United for Separation of Church and State, said the district will be inviting a lawsuit if it chooses a textbook that teaches creationism.

"Creationism isn't a science, it's religion, and any attempts to introduce creationism into public school science classes would most likely spark a lawsuit," Boston said. "The district would almost certainly lose a lawsuit like that. It's not even worth wasting the time and energy to consider."

The Washington, D.C.-based group is leading the charge in Hanover to remove a monument to the Ten Commandments from the borough-owned Wirt Park.

12/31/2004

P 01311

Americans United sent a letter to the borough council in November, saying the monument violates the First Amendment and asking that it be removed from public land, where it has been since the 1950s.

The letter sparked strong public response, as residents signed petitions and held a vigil asking the borough not to move the monument.

At the suggestion of State Rep. Steve Nickol, the council petitioned the York County Common Pleas Court for permission to sell the monument and the land on which it sits to a nonprofit organization, so that it will no longer be on public property. Judge Gregory Snyder will hear Hanover's arguments at 9 a.m. Monday.

Previous cases: In 1987, the U.S. Supreme Court rejected the teaching of creationism in public school as a violation of the separation of church and state.

But Buckingham said he is unconcerned about violating the separation of church and state.

Although he swore to uphold the Constitution when he became a school board member, Buckingham said he didn't come to uphold the separation of church and state, which he sees as a myth and the Supreme Court's interpretation.

Also, the Pennsylvania Department of Education high school science standards require the teaching of evolution.

Assistant Superintendent Michael Baksa said the current textbook, called Biology: The Living Science, and the school's science curriculum teach evolution.

"We do not address the origins of life," he said. "The origin of life is left to the personal beliefs of each family."

However, he said teachers may make reference to creationism in class and the district would not prevent students from pursuing other theories.

The district has not rejected the proposed new textbook, Baksa said, but it will continue to look for a book that will make everyone happy.

However, he acknowledged that at the end of the day, the book has to match state standards, which would mean a book that teaches evolution.

The other curriculum committee members stayed away from the creationism issue.

Brown declined to comment, saying she will be making a public statement on the issue at the next board meeting, at 7 p.m. Monday at North Salem Elementary.

Harkins said she didn't think the high school needed a new science textbook, saying the current one has hardly been used. She would not comment on creationism.

The school board will have the final say on which textbook to use, said Superintendent Richard Nilsen. [Subscribe Now!](#)

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P 01313

12/31/2004

Dover schools still debating biology text; A board member said a book was rejected because it didn't offer creationism.;

JOSEPH MALDONADO. *York Daily Record*. York, Pa.: Jun 9, 2004. pg. 4

Abstract (Document Summary)

Board President Alan Bonsell disagreed, saying there were only two theories (creationism and evolution) that could possibly be taught. He said as long as both were taught as theories, there would be no problems for the district.

He said there needn't be consideration of the beliefs of Hindus, Buddhists, Muslims or other faiths and views. "This country wasn't founded on Muslim beliefs or evolution," he said. "This country was founded on Christianity, and our students should be taught as such."

Full Text (299 words)

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Former Dover school board member Barrie Callahan repeated her request for new biology books for the high school at Monday night's board meeting.

For the past few months, she has appeared several times before the board to request a status update.

Board member William Buckingham, who sits on the curriculum committee, said a book had been under consideration ("Biology," by Miller and Levine) but was declined because of its one-sided references to evolution.

"It's inexcusable to teach from a book that says man descended from apes and monkeys," he said. "We want a book that gives balance to education."

Buckingham and other board members are looking for a book that teaches creationism and evolution.

But a former student, Max Pell, told the board Monday night that he was concerned that that type of book would trample on the separation of church and state.

Board President Alan Bonsell disagreed, saying there were only two theories (creationism and evolution) that could possibly be taught. He said as long as both were taught as theories, there would be no problems for the district.

"Have you ever heard of brainwashing?" Buckingham asked Pell. "If students are taught only evolution, it stops becoming theory and becomes fact."

After the meeting, Buckingham said all he wants is a book that offers balance between what he said are Christian views of creationism and evolution.

He said there needn't be consideration of the beliefs of Hindus, Buddhists, Muslims or other faiths and views. "This country wasn't founded on Muslim beliefs or evolution," he said. "This country was founded on Christianity, and our students should be taught as such."

On Tuesday, Assistant Superintendent Michael Baksa said teachers, administrators and curriculum committee members will work together to find a book that is agreeable to all.

Credit: York Daily Record

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York Daily Record (PA)

June 10, 2004

Section: LOCAL

Page: 01/03

Residents join creation debate A school board member's objection to evolution raises worries about curriculum.

Author: *JOSEPH MALDONADO; For the Daily Record/Sunday News*

Article Text:

Robert Bowman of Dover is a Christian man. But after reading about the Dover Area School Board's desire to have theories of creation taught alongside of evolution in his daughter's biology class, he still saw a potential for problems in the classroom.

"It seems like Bill (school board member William Buckingham) wants more of a church thing to be going on in school," Bowman said. "But there are a lot of different beliefs even among those that call themselves Christian. Which school board member is going to declare whose version is right?"

During this past Monday night's board meeting, board members Alan Bonsell, Noel Wenrich and Buckingham spoke aggressively in favor of having a biology book that includes theories of creation as part of the text.

"All I'm asking for is balance," Buckingham said.

Asked if he thought this might violate the separation of church and state, Buckingham called the law, "a myth."

Resident Richard Cherry suggested parents who want religion taught as part of a science curriculum enroll their children in Christian or Catholic schools funded by private tuition, not tax dollars.

"Muslims pay taxes, too," said Bowman. "To shoot down their faith and beliefs by saying it's not as important as Christianity isn't fair."

But fellow resident Tom Jackson, who said he was a Christian, said he saw no problem with offending others with different beliefs.

"There really are no other religions," he said. "There's atheism and Christianity. That's it."

12/31/2004

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York Daily Record (PA)

June 14, 2004

Section: MAIN

Page: 01, 07

UPDATE School board talks books

Article Text:

Last time: Dover school board member **William Buckingham** said a new biology book for the district should offer a balance between creationism and Darwin's theory of evolution.

The latest: County residents weigh in with concerns about neglecting the views of other religions.

What's next: Residents are invited to voice their opinions at tonight's Dover school board meeting. 1B

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P 01321

12/31/2004

Textbook controversy continues

The Dover Area School Board is debating teaching creation along with evolution.

By JOSEPH MALDONADO
For the Daily Record/Sunday News
Monday, June 14, 2004

Nearly a week after the Dover Area School Board's controversial comments about teaching creation along with evolution in biology class, people across the county are pondering the potential benefits and repercussions.

At last Monday's school board meeting, board member William Buckingham said as part of a search for a new biology book, he and others are looking for one that offers balance between the Christian views of creation and Darwin's Theory of Evolution.

After the meeting, he also said there needn't be any other considerations for the beliefs of Hindus, Buddhists, Muslims or other competing faiths and views.

"This country wasn't founded on Muslim beliefs or evolution," he said. "This country was founded on Christianity and our students should be taught as such."

Like Buckingham, Jeff Packard of Springettsbury Township said he, too, has a problem with evolutionary theories and principals. But he also has a problem with government officials forcing their religious views on their constituents.

"It's pretty clear that many of the founding fathers were Christian men," said Packard after doing some afternoon shopping in East York. "But given the wording of the Constitution, it's also clear they wanted to protect the religious beliefs of others."

One of the biggest reasons people came to America was to escape religious persecution, Packard said. "You can't mandate a belief in God," he said. "Faith is a matter of the individual soul and free will."

On Thursday, school board member Noel Wenrich said that no student would be required to believe in creation or a creator any more than they are currently required to believe in evolution.

<http://ydr.com/story/local/28613/printer/>

6/14/2004

"What I am saying is that when you teach only one theory (evolution), that theory becomes a fact," Wenrich said. "I'm not saying that students must believe in creation, but I do believe they must consider the possibility."

Still, Packard said the burden of providing that sort of information to children should fall upon parents, not government. He also said he believes that mandating people to hear about God goes against the individual commission given to all Christians, which is to witness in the name of Jesus personally.

"Look at Christ, himself" Packard said. "He didn't try to change the world by running for office. He did it one-on-one, with love and grace."

While shopping for some video games at West Manchester Mall last week, 15-year-old Mike Johnson said he has no problem with creation being taught in science.

In the fall, Mike will be a sophomore at Dover Area High School.

"I think it would be neat to learn about that," he said, "But not if Christianity is going to be the only religion we talk about."

Mike said he worries that kids who aren't Christian will be made fun of and get told to leave the country.

"I think they might be afraid to raise their hand," he said. "And if that happens, they could lose participation points, which would affect their grades."

His friend, 16-year-old David Storms, will be a sophomore at York County School of Technology in the fall. Like Mike, he said the thought of learning about creation in the classroom is an appealing idea.

"But I think it would be better to learn all beliefs," David said. "I don't think it's right to say that anyone's opinion doesn't matter just because their beliefs are different from yours."

IF YOU GO

The public will have a chance to speak on the issue of teaching evolution and creationism in Dover schools at the school board meeting at 7 p.m. today at North Salem Elementary School.

<http://ydr.com/story/local/28613/printer/>

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York Dispatch, The (PA)

June 15, 2004

Section: TOP STORIES

Church, state issue divides

Creationism draws 100 to Dover meeting

Author: *HEIDI BERNHARD-BUBB For The York Dispatch*

Article Text:

Nearly 100 Dover residents and teachers attended last night's school board meeting to continue debating whether creationism should be taught alongside evolution in the high school's biology curriculum.

At the center of the controversy is a ninth-grade biology textbook, the 2002 edition of Prentice Hall Biology, which is up for adoption for the upcoming school year and which offended several board members because it teaches evolution without reference to creationism.

Last night's debate determined one thing — there are strong feelings on both sides of the issue. The audience responded to each speaker with smatterings of applause.

Board member and curriculum committee member Casey Brown said it is her duty as a board member to uphold her oath to support the Constitution and the school code, which she said is clear about the separation of church and state.

In 1987, the U.S. Supreme Court rejected the teaching of creationism in public school as a violation of the separation of church and state. In addition, the Pennsylvania Department of Education high school science standards require the teaching of evolution.

The 'least offensive option': High school Principal Trudy Peterman and Bertha Spahr, head of the science department, said the faculty considered that Dover was a religious community when they selected the book, which they believed was the least offensive option.

The book includes one chapter on evolution, which includes a description of Charles Darwin's theory of natural selection and how he developed his theories.

Brown quoted from the teacher's edition that the purpose of the section on evolution was to "help students understand the evolutionary worldview and promote understanding without compelling belief."

The book, which has been reviewed for more than a year, was selected by the high school science

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department and district administration to replace the current textbook, which is six years old and out of date in some areas.

Spahr said the teachers do not address the origins of life, suggesting to the students that other theories are in existence and should be taught by students' families or at their churches.

She added that the curriculum is aligned with state standards, which she said do not include creationism.

Opponents' position: **William Buckingham**, a board member and head of the curriculum committee, who brought up the issue last week, stood by his opposition to the book and the separation of church and state.

"Nearly 2,000 years ago someone died on a cross for us; shouldn't we have the courage to stand up for him?" he asked.

Board members **Alan Bonnell** and **Noel Wenrich** agreed with **Buckingham**, saying creationism should be taught to balance evolution.

Buckingham apologized for offending any teachers or residents of the community with his remarks but was unapologetic about his belief that the country was founded on Christianity and not other religions and that a "liberal agenda was chipping away at the rights of Christians in this country."

His remarks were echoed by his wife, **Charlotte Buckingham**, who said that teaching evolution was in direct opposition to God's teachings and that the people of Dover could not in good conscience allow the district to teach anything but creationism.

A minister's view: Dover resident **Warren Eschbach**, a minister of the Church of the Brethren, said he was concerned that the issue was polarizing the district.

He said that he believes people might believe in both God and evolution, adding that while public schools should have values, religious beliefs should be taught at home and church. **Eschbach** also said he was concerned that compelling the staff to teach creationism might expose the district to legal ramifications that could impact the taxpayers.

Robert Boston, spokesman for Americans United for Separation of Church and State, has said the district will be inviting a lawsuit if it chooses a textbook that teaches creationism. **Buckingham** said he did not believe the members of the AU know what it means to be American.

The school board approved six new textbooks for the high school last night, but the biology book was not among them.

Assistant Superintendent **Michael Baksa** said the curriculum committee, made up of **Brown**, **Buckingham** and **Sheila Harkins**, is scheduled to meet tomorrow to look for a book that will make everyone happy.

Although the committee is expected to make a recommendation on a textbook, **Baksa** said the entire board will ultimately determine which book is selected. [Subscribe Now!](#)

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12/31/2004

Book is focus of more debate

The teaching of creationism or evolution was the topic again at the Dover Area School Board meeting.

By JOSEPH MALDONADO
For the Daily Record/Sunday News
Tuesday, June 15, 2004

At Monday evening's Dover Area School Board meeting, William Buckingham apologized to anyone he may have offended with the comments he made at last week's board meeting during discussions over a new biology book for the high school.

But then the school board member reiterated one of his statements to the roughly 90 in attendance that the separation of church and state is a myth.

"Nowhere in the Constitution does it call for a separation of church and state," he said.

But, in part of the First Amendment to the Constitution, it states that "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof ..."

Buckingham said while growing up, his generation prayed and read from the Bible during school. Then he said liberals in "black robes" were taking away the rights of Christians.

"Two thousand years ago, someone died on a cross," he said. "Can't someone take a stand for him?"

Last week, Buckingham said that the science department's choice for a new biology book is "laced" with Darwinism. This week, he said a Seattle-based think-tank gave the book, "Biology," by Miller and Levine, an "F" grade. He didn't name the think-tank at the meeting and he didn't say why the book received an "F."

But in reference to its teaching of Darwinism, he said, "I challenge you (the audience) to trace your roots to the monkey you came from."

Board member Carol Brown said she reviewed the book and had it with her at the meeting. She said the book makes no mention of anyone evolving from monkeys.

During public comments, Bertha Spahr, chair of the high school science department, said the 1,000-plus-page text only contains seven pages that refer to Darwinism.

In addition to meeting state standards, she said the book was chosen by her department because it takes into account the many different beliefs Dover residents may have.

"It was the least offensive book we could find," she said.

Also during public comments, Buckingham's wife, Charlotte Buckingham, argued that evolution teaches nothing but lies. After quoting several verses from the book of Genesis in the Bible, she asked, "How can we allow anything else to be taught in our schools?"

During her time, she repeated gospel verses telling people how to become born-again Christians and said evolution was in direct violation of the teachings of the Bible.

But the Rev. Warren Eshbach, retired, said the book of Genesis was not written as a science book, but rather as a statement of faith. "It's the place of the church to teach on matters of faith," he said. "Not public schools."

He also said the creationism vs. evolution issue was polarizing the community.

During the meeting, Buckingham told those in attendance that he had been asked to tone down his Christian remarks.

"But I must be who I am, and not politically correct," he said.

After the discussion, Dover Area High School graduate Brad Erney said creationism would only be acceptable in the classroom if it could be taught without a religious context.

"But that's impossible," he said. "This whole thing opens the board up to lawsuits that could end up costing already overburdened taxpayers a lot of money."

As resident Susan Napierskie was leaving the meeting with her three young daughters, she said she had mixed feelings.

"I'm raising my girls with Christian values," she said. "But I can't be a hypocrite and say that in a public school, teachers can only teach from a Christian perspective. One of the reasons people settled in this country was to escape religious persecution."

Napierskie shook her head and said the teaching of evolution does have the potential to undermine the values she is trying to instill in her daughters.

Faithful divided on book; Some say students can learn science and faith; Some say students should learn both creationism and evolution.;

KAREN MULLER. York Daily Record. York, Pa. Jun 21, 2004. pg. 1/08

Abstract (Document Summary)

He didn't remember learning about evolution, he said Sunday after worship at the Dover United Church of Christ in Dover.

[Jessica] is less enthusiastic. She said if evolution is taught, so should creationism, which is essentially the argument of Christians in the Dover area who are against evolution in a high school text.

North of the Dover square on Carlisle Road, members of Dover Assembly of God of Dover Township applauded those who are speaking out against the biology text.

Full Text (634 words)

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Eighteen-year-old Matthew Rupp's high school memories may be a little foggy seen through his "senior" vision.

He graduated from Dover Area High School this month and his thoughts are more on the future than in the past.

He didn't remember learning about evolution, he said Sunday after worship at the Dover United Church of Christ in Dover.

The problem was the word.

"I guess we did talk a little bit about Darwin," he said, a sheepish smile teasing his lips. "We talked about natural selection."

Dover UCC is on West Canal Road across from his alma mater, where the school board is debating the adoption of a new biology textbook.

The text has angered some Christians in the community who object to the seven pages on the origins of life and the omission of the Genesis account of God creating the Earth.

But evolution in a textbook new or old doesn't bother Rupp, who has attended church with his family his entire life.

Even if his teachers had spent more time on Charles Darwin's ideas, Rupp went on, it wouldn't have changed his faith.

His 15-year-old sister, Jessica, took biology in ninth grade last year, she said, but the school year ended before the class could get to evolution.

She learned about it in history, instead, during the study of the John Scopes "Monkey Trial" of 1925.

"Personally," she said, "I don't think it would affect me whether I learned it or not."

Her brother thinks natural selection could make sense in the wild, where stronger animals may outlive weaker ones.

Jessica is less enthusiastic. She said if evolution is taught, so should creationism, which is essentially the argument of Christians in the Dover area who are against evolution in a high school text.

Where is the chapter on Creation?

"Everyone has their own set of beliefs," Jessica said. "Why should you force evolution on me?"

North of the Dover square on Carlisle Road, members of Dover Assembly of God of Dover Township applaud those who are speaking out against the biology text.

"Whatever the Bible says is what I stick to," said the Rev. Rick Roth, the associate pastor.

Yvette Sproull, wife of the Rev. David Sproull, homeschools their five kids ranging from infancy to 8 years old because of ideology such as evolution that contradicts what they believe.

The Sproull's older children already know about evolution, Yvette Sproull said. Whenever they come across the topic in children's dinosaur books, they discuss it, she said, and then they tear out the page.

"Eventually, we are going to have to tell them about homosexuality and premarital sex," she said.

Other Christians feel those who are angry about the inclusion of evolution in a textbook are the ones who are out of line.

The Rev. Michael Loser of Dover UCC said he wants to teach the joy of the life in Christ, but it is difficult when people hear Christians judging people who believe differently and telling them they are wrong.

"It aggravates me that these people speak as if they speak for all Christians," he said, "and, in fact, they are not."

Teaching about Creation in a public school would be inappropriate, he said, because it was never meant to be science.

"(Evolution) doesn't threaten my faith," he said. "What I like about evolution is the upward movement . . . That God is calling the whole Creation to be like what God wants it to be."

Christine Rupp, Matthew and Jessica's mother, said it is an issue that won't easily be solved in Dover, because whatever the outcome, it is impossible to please everyone.

She just hopes the textbook battle doesn't go to court.

"I just think we have to accept each other," she said.

Reach Karen Muller at 771-2024 or kmuller@ydr.com.

Credit: York Daily Record

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People: Rupp, Matthew, Sproull, Yvette

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York Dispatch, The (PA)

July 13, 2004

Section: TOP STORIES

**Dover schools
delays text vote
New version of
book available**

Author: *HEIDI BERNHARD-BUBB For The York Dispatch*

Article Text:

The Dover Area School Board postponed its vote on a new ninth-grade biology textbook, but not because of the debate over creationism versus evolution that it sparked last month.

Rather, a newer, 2004 edition of the same book, Prentice Hall Biology, has been published and will be available to the district at no additional cost for the upcoming school year.

The board is waiting because no one in the district has reviewed the new edition.

William Buckingham, the head of the school board curriculum committee who brought up the issue of creationism, said he had not seen the book and would not make any further comment on the creationism issue until next month when the board is expected to vote on adopting the book.

The board will meet at 7 p.m. Aug. 2 at North Salem Elementary School.

Creationism debate: Last month, several board members said the 2002 edition offended them because it teaches evolution -- that man evolved from lower life forms -- without reference to creationism -- that God created man.

Other board members said they believed teaching creationism would violate the separation of church and state.

In 1987, the U.S. Supreme Court rejected the teaching of creationism in public school as a violation of the separation of church and state. In addition, the Pennsylvania Department of Education high school science standards require the teaching of evolution.

Bertha Spahr, head of the high school science department, said last month that the curriculum is aligned with state standards and teachers do not address the origins of life, suggesting to the students that other

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theories are in existence and should be taught by students' families or at their churches.

Review process: The 2002 edition was under review for more than a year. It was selected by the high school science department and district administrators to replace the current textbook, which is six years old and out of date.

However, Buckingham said the book was "laced with Darwinism" and offends his Christian values.

The board curriculum committee subsequently met with Assistant Superintendent Michael Baksa, high school principal Trudy Peterman, Spahr and high school science teachers Jen Miller and Rob Eshbach to review additional texts to look for an option that might make everyone happy, said Baksa.

According to Baksa, the committee reviewed six textbooks, and none of them mentioned creationism.

He added that he believed that the meeting resulted in a better understanding in what is being taught in the district, specifically that the origins of life are not addressed and left to the individual beliefs of students.

-- Reach Heidi Bernhard-Bubb at 854-1575 or news@yorkdispatch.com.

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Bio book might be approved; The texts considered by Dover schools did not contain references to creationism.;

JOSEPH MALDONADO, York Daily Record, York, Pa.: Jul 14, 2004. pg. 9

Abstract (Document Summary)

Assistant Supt. Michael Baksa said the new edition still meets state standards and teaches evolution. There are no references to creationism, he said.

After the meeting, [Bill Buckingham], who has opposed approving any book that does not teach creationism along with evolution, did not say if he would vote to approve the 2004 edition.

Voting for the budget were Alan Bonsell, Jeffrey Brown, Carol "[Casey]" Brown, Bill Buckingham, Jane Cleaver and Noel Wenrich. Voting against were Heather Geesey, [Sheila Harkins] and Angie Yingling.

Full Text (373 words)

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On Aug. 2, the Dover Area School Board may vote to order a new biology book. Which book? The 2004 edition of the one they declined in June over its references to Darwinism.

The issue was discussed during Monday evening's school board meeting at North Salem Elementary School. About 20 people attended.

The book discussed last month was the 2002 edition of "Biology," published by Prentice Hall.

Assistant Supt. Michael Baksa said the new edition still meets state standards and teaches evolution. There are no references to creationism, he said.

"We looked at between six or eight books," Baksa said. "This one is still the first choice."

There were several reasons why the others were not selected, Baksa said, including readability, layout, and content as it related to curriculum.

He said neither creation nor intelligent design were a part of any books that were reviewed.

Baksa said in recent weeks, faculty members from the science department met with school board members sitting on the curriculum committee.

They talked about state standards and how those standards are met in the classroom.

Curriculum committee members are Bill Buckingham, Sheila Harkins and Carol "Casey" Brown.

After the meeting, Buckingham, who has opposed approving any book that does not teach creationism along with evolution, did not say if he would vote to approve the 2004 edition.

"You're trying to get me in trouble by asking," he said.

"If you want to know how I'll vote, come to the next meeting." Principal resigns

Trudy Peterman resigned as principal of Dover Area High School to become assistant superintendent of the Greater Johnstown School District. Current associate superintendent Joe Riedel will become the new principal

effective today. Budget approval

In June, the school board approved the 2004-05 budget. Expenditures are expected to be \$34,885,672 while revenue is expected to be \$33,920,117.

To make up the difference, the board approved a tax increase of 1.35 mills. The increase will raise the overall millage rate to 18.77 and cost the owner of a \$100,000 home an additional \$135 annually.

Voting for the budget were Alan Bonsell, Jeffrey Brown, Carol "Casey" Brown, Bill Buckingham, Jane Cleaver and Noel Wenrich. Voting against were Heather Geesey, Sheila Harkins and Angie Yingling.

Credit: York Daily Record

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People: Baksa, Michael, Buckingham, Bill

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York Dispatch, The (PA)

August 3, 2004

Section: TOP STORIES

Divided Dover board OKs biology text

Author: *HEIDI BERNHARD-BUBB* <i>For The York Dispatch</i>

Article Text:

A divided Dover Area school board approved a new ninth-grade biology textbook last night, but the debate over teaching creationism alongside evolution in the district is far from over.

It took two votes and a heated discussion to garner approval for the text, which had offended several board members because it teaches evolution without reference to creationism.

Companion: **William Buckingham**, the head of the school board curriculum committee who brought up the issue of teaching creationism in June, said he would approve the biology textbook, the 2004 edition of "Prentice Hall Biology," only in conjunction with a "companion text" that teaches "intelligent design."

Buckingham proposed a book titled "Of Pandas and People: The Central Question of Biological Origins." The book, originally published by the Foundation for Thought and Ethics in 1989, presents the theory of "intelligent design" and questions the science behind Darwin's theory of evolution.

In the first vote on the "Prentice Hall Biology" text, the board was deadlocked with **Buckingham** and members **Sheila Harkins**, **Angie Yingling**, and **Heather Geesey** voting against approval and members **Jeff Brown**, **Casey Brown**, **Noel Wenrich**, and **Alan Bonsell** voting for approval of the text. Ninth member **Jane Cleaver** was absent, and the motion was defeated on a 4-4 vote.

Wenrich and **Bonsell** said that they could not vote for the "companion text" because they had not reviewed it and it had not been reviewed by the faculty curriculum committee.

Deadline: **Buckingham** proposed waiting to approve "Prentice Hall Biology" until the other book had been reviewed; however, a delayed vote would have meant that the students and teachers would not have a biology text for the new school year.

"I don't like blackmail; I don't like it that if we don't approve this other book then that means no book," said a visibly upset **Jeff Brown**.

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Student board representative Joshua Rowland questioned why the biology students should go without a textbook for this one issue.

"In 90 days of class, we only spent one day on evolution, so, because of this one issue, they don't get new books?"

Buckingham maintained that the books should only be approved together, saying, "We have an opportunity to level the playing field. What is everyone so afraid of?"

Member Casey Brown said that as a member of the curriculum committee she had read the proposed supplemental text from cover to cover and that she didn't believe it fit with the district's curriculum, was not sure about the concept of intelligent design, and was sure that it contained "bad science."

After several heated exchanges, Yingling decided to change her vote to move the process forward, but she said she is behind **Buckingham** philosophically.

The "Prentice Hall Biology" book was approved 5-3 and the board plans to vote on "'Of Pandas and People next month after the faculty and remaining board members have reviewed the book.

Other theories: Bertha Spahr, head of the Dover science department has stated that the curriculum is aligned with state standards and teachers do not address the origins of life, suggesting to students that other theories are in existence and should be taught by students' families or at their churches.

The Prentice Hall text was under review for more than a year. It was selected by the high school science department and district administrators to replace the current textbook, which is six years old and out of date.

The board is expected to vote on the supplemental text at their next meeting, at 7 p.m. Sept. 6 at North Salem Elementary School, 5161 North Salem Church Road.

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York Daily Record (PA)

August 3, 2004

Section: LOCAL

Page: 01

DOVER Biology text approved

Article Text:

The Dover Area School Board approved the book, "Biology" by Prentice Hall, for use in this coming school year.

Initially, the board deadlocked in a 4-4 vote. William Buckingham, Sheila Harkins, Heather Geesey and Angie Yingling voted against it while Alan Bonsell, Noel Wenrich, Jeff Brown and Carol Brown voted in favor. Jane Cleaver was absent.

After the vote, Buckingham said he would approve the book if the board would also approve a second "companion" book called "Pandas and People," which is about Intelligent Design Theory. Jeff Brown accused the four no votes of blackmailing the board and holding the students hostage.

Buckingham then said if he didn't get his book, the district would not get the biology book. Buckingham has been a staunch advocate for teaching creationism alongside evolution.

But after 30 minutes of debate, Yingling called for a reconsideration vote and changed her mind. The book passed 5-3. The board is still considering the approval of the companion book. A vote on that book could come in September.

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York Dispatch, The (PA)

August 3, 2004

Section: TOP STORIES

Michigan law center offers a defense of creationism

Author: *HEIDI BERNHARD BUBB* <D>For The York Dispatch</D>

Article Text:

If the Dover Area school board approves an additional text for the biology curriculum next month, it may put itself at odds with the U.S. Supreme Court and at risk of a lawsuit, but it may receive aid from a conservative law center in Michigan.

Robert Boston, spokesman for Americans United for Separation of Church and State, has said the district will be inviting a lawsuit if it chooses a textbook that teaches creationism. William Buckingham said he has received a letter from Americans United threatening to sue.

However, another outside agency has said it will come to the aid of the district if it selects a high school biology textbook that teaches creationism.

In a letter to Buckingham and the district, Richard Thompson, president of the Thomas More Law Center, based in Ann Arbor, Michigan, said, "A textbook adopted by the school board that presents an alternative theory to evolution does not violate the Constitution as long as the alternative theory is appropriately presented."

Thompson offered to represent the district without charge against any lawsuit brought by Americans United.

On its Web site, www.thomasmore.org, the center is described as a national public interest law firm with a three-part mission to: defend the religious freedom of Christians; restore time-honored family values; and protect the sanctity of human life.

Buckingham said that the Thomas More Law Center had recommended the text "Of Pandas and People."

He also said that the district's attorney was reviewing the center's history in court over similar issues.

In 1987, the U.S. Supreme Court rejected the teaching of creationism in public school as a violation of the separation of church and state. In addition, the Pennsylvania Department of Education high school

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science standards require the teaching of evolution.

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York Daily Record (PA)

August 4, 2004

Section: LOCAL

Page: 03

Biology book squeaked by Dover Area schools' evolution debate included accusations of blackmail.

Author: *JOSEPH MALDONADO; For the Daily Record/Sunday News*

Article Text:

Some of the thunder heard in Dover had nothing to do with the weather Monday evening as the Dover Area School Board approved the book, "Biology," by Prentice Hall for use in this coming school year.

Initially, the board deadlocked in a 4-4 vote. William Buckingham, Sheila Harkins, Heather Geesey and Angie Yingling voted against approving the book while Alan Bonsell, Noel Wenrich, Jeff Brown and Carol Brown voted in favor. Jane Cleaver was absent.

After that vote, Buckingham said he would approve the book if the board would also approve a "companion" book, "Pandas and People," which advocates "intelligent design theory" -- the idea that the universe was created by an intelligent force rather than the product of random forces.

Jeff Brown accused the four board members voting no of blackmailing the board and holding the students hostage.

Buckingham then said if he didn't get his book, the district would not get the biology book. Buckingham has been a staunch advocate for the teaching of creationism alongside of evolution.

"If we don't get our book, you don't get yours," Buckingham said.

Superintendent Richard Nilsen asked if those voting no intended to change the curriculum, which does not call for the teaching of intelligent design.

Buckingham said the intelligent design book would "level the playing field," in reference to the state's evolution requirement. Harkins said she supported Buckingham. Geesey and Yingling made no comment.

Student representative to the board Joshua Rowand said he remembers spending 90 minutes talking about evolution. Fellow student representative Holly Crane said she didn't remember talking about it at

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all.

"We need a biology book," Rowand said. "Is all of this really over a few pages out of a 1,000 page book?"

As the debate raged on, Yingling raised her hand and asked if she could change her vote. A reconsideration motion was approved, and with her vote now a yes, the book passed 5-3.

After the meeting, Yingling said she couldn't say why she changed her mind.

But as Buckingham approached her, he said, "I can't believe you did that. Do you know what you've done?"

To that, Yingling replied, "I feel you were blackmailing them. I just want the kids to have their books."

During the discussion period after the first vote, Harkins said the intelligent design book had been in the hands of the faculty and administration for at least two weeks. But Nilsen said he was unaware of who had reviewed it.

After the meeting Buckingham told Yingling that he felt the faculty had all reviewed the book and would never approve it.

"If the administration does not approve a book, then it takes a two-thirds majority for the board to get it approved instead of a simple majority," he told Yingling. "That's why we needed to hold our ground tonight."

The board is still considering approving the companion book for use in the classroom. During the meeting Bonsell and Wenrich promised Buckingham that the intelligent design book would get a fair review.

"Six votes are not out of the question," Bonsell said.

The board voted to cancel its Aug. 9 meeting, so the earliest the board could vote on the book is at its Sept. 6 meeting at North Salem Elementary School. QUOTE: 'I just want the kids to have their books.' DOVER AREA SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER ANGIE YINGLING, WHO CHANGED HER VOTE TO YES TO OK A BIOLOGY TEXT

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York Sunday News (PA)

September 5, 2004

Section: LOCAL

Page: 01/06

An evolving controversy Dispute over teaching about the origins of life is likely to flare again this week

Author: LAURI LEBOW; Daily Record/Sunday News

Article Text:

The debate over teaching creationism in science class has quieted down since the Dover Area School Board approved its high school biology textbook last month.

But some Dover Area School Board members say they expect to revisit the issue at their next meeting, when William Buckingham will propose introducing to the district the controversial book "Of Pandas and People: The Central Question of Biological Origins."

Buckingham says the book should be taught as a companion text to the approved biology book, and he thinks he will have the support at the Tuesday meeting to get the book into the classroom.

"I feel good about it," he said. "I think we have a chance."

It's a case biologists across the country say they are familiar with and one that is similar to what is happening in other states.

The book teaches the concept of "intelligent design" - the idea that all life was created by a divine being - and supporters of teaching creationism say it's about fairness, giving equal time to competing theories.

But to others, it's an attempt to introduce religion through the back door.

"It's not science," said John Staver, director of science education at Kansas State University.

The concept of intelligent design requires faith, he said, which contradicts the critical thought demanded in science. Fair and balanced

While Buckingham considers the Bible's Book of Genesis to be life's blueprint, he says the issue of intelligent design is a pragmatic compromise between his beliefs and what the law will allow.

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Intelligent design does not necessarily contradict many of the arguments in favor of evolution - such as the ideas of natural selection and adaptation, or the scientific belief that the Earth is as much as 4.5 billion years old.

But intelligent design goes beyond science - evolutionary theory may explain how we got here, but it doesn't answer why.

"Pandas" seeks to answer that question by arguing that natural selection and changes to the gene pool could not have happened randomly.

But the problem is that intelligent design, like creationism, violates the scientific method, said Karl Kleiner, a biology professor at York College. No experiment can prove or disprove God's existence.

"Intelligent design still relies on an event that is not replicable," Kleiner said. Scientists test their theories by trying to prove them false, and advocates of intelligent design are unable to do that, he said.

"They can't say, 'Well, maybe a divine being didn't create it.'"

Flagella and giraffes

"Pandas" uses the giraffe's long neck to illustrate the argument for intelligent design.

The book argues the giraffe's long neck depends on a series of integrated adaptations that could not have happened separately, so they must have been present from the beginning of the species' existence.

→ A giraffe's circulatory system includes a coordinated system of blood pressure controls. The book says pressure sensors along the neck's arteries monitor the blood pressure and activate contraction of the artery walls.

"The complex circulatory system of the giraffe must appear at the same time as its long neck or the animal will not survive," authors Percival Davis and Dean Kenyon write.

Similarly, Michael J. Behe, a biochemistry professor at Lehigh University, coined the term "irreducible complexity" - the idea that in order for many organisms to have evolved at the cellular level, multiple systems would have had to arise simultaneously. In many cases, he argues, this is a mathematical impossibility.

Behe uses the bacterial flagellum as an example, arguing that for the propeller-like appendage to move, between 30 and 40 protein parts are needed. Removal of any one of those parts causes the system to cease functioning - just as a mousetrap depends on all its pieces to operate.

Darwinism's theory of intermediate and incremental evolutionary steps can't explain this, Behe said.

"It's one big step," he said.

But Kleiner says other scientists have found that the flagellum parts aren't as unique as Behe states and intelligent design proponents are missing a key point - that for every evolutionary step, there were countless genetic mutations that provided no useful advantage to the organism and died out.

Kleiner said supporters often use the eye to argue for intelligent design, saying that surely no singular

organism was born with a genetic mutation that bestowed eyesight. Misrepresenting Darwinism?

But Kleiner said such an argument misrepresents Darwinism.

"It didn't happen overnight," he said.

Instead, a group of cells might have been light-sensitive, permitting an organism to sense shadows, perhaps an advantage in escaping predators. Such a trait would permit the organism to survive long enough to produce offspring who in turn inherited the genetic mutation.

Over time, incremental changes occurred, each one providing an evolutionary advantage until full eyesight evolved.

The same theory applies to the giraffe's long neck, Kleiner said.

"This is the process by which we have diversity on Earth," he said. "If it's not a useful trait, then it will be eliminated from the gene pool."

Additionally, design advocates misrepresent evolution, scientists say, when they maintain that mainstream biology rules out the handiwork of a divine creator.

"Evolution doesn't deny the existence of a God. It just doesn't require one," Kleiner said.

Mainstream biologists and paleontologists continue to debate the fossil evidence for the origins of life, and just as there is room for debate within evolutionary theory, there is disagreement within intelligent design.

While Behe, a Christian and author of "Darwin's Black Box," believes in a common ancestry - the idea that all life, including humans, descended from a common ancestor - other ID proponents disagree and say that a divine being created each individual lifeform with a unique plan.

Professor John Staver has followed the Dover battle from his office at Kansas State University.

National battlegrounds

Since his previous appointment as co-chairman of the 1999 committee to revise science requirements for Kansas schools, Staver has been at the forefront of the battle between evolution and creationism.

Five years ago, the Kansas Board of Education voted to downplay evolution in the state's science standards - which, for many of the state's biologists, became something of a national embarrassment.

After the November 2000 elections, the state board's political makeup changed and the board approved standards stating evolution is a concept unifying all scientific disciplines. But the state Board of Education is expected to be taken over by pro-creationists after the fall election, and Staver said he expects he will be revisiting the issue in 2005.

Ohio has become another battleground, Staver said. After intense lobbying by intelligent-design proponents, the state school board there recently completed curriculum standards, including the writing of model lesson plans, one of which incorporates intelligent design.

Efforts in Pennsylvania to introduce creationism to a statewide curriculum have so far been unsuccessful, but the wording of the state Department of Education's policy leaves the question of teaching creationism open to debate.

The state's official statement on creationism doesn't say it can't be taught in the public schools, and officials are vague on how the subject can be handled.

"Whether it is constitutional to teach creation in the public schools depends on the context in which the instruction occurs," the statement says.

"It is clearly permissible to teach creation as part of a course regarding theories of evolution, which course is part of the school district's curriculum. . . . What occurs or what is proposed in the course must be viewed on an individual basis."

Kleiner expresses the concern that intelligent design could potentially curtail critical thinking and quash scientific curiosity.

"What were the factors that made the giraffe tall?" Kleiner asked. "It doesn't matter. God did it.

"Clearly if your response is to say evolution doesn't happen, then, basically, not to think in evolutionary terms is not to think at all," he said, quoting scientist and Nobel laureate Peter Medawar.

Behe, on the other hand, argues that not permitting intelligent design in science class inhibits critical thinking by preventing alternative views.

"Science is still pretty clueless about how life started," he said. "This is what kinda galls me, that students are being misled to believe that science knows more than it does."

Faith versus science

In the world of science, there is little controversy about creationism, Staver said.

"It's not established science," he said. "Scientists have a lot of weird ideas, but in order to pass muster they have to go through the social community process, let your colleagues examine it, crawl back to your lab, figure out if your criticisms are good."

But the ID proponents have been trying to cut in line, Staver said. "ID folks are appealing to a public that we know has a relatively low level of scientific literacy.

"They won't say it, but they want to recast the paradigm of science to include God within it," Staver said.

Even though he is a staunch proponent of evolution, Staver doesn't dispute the existence of God.

"I accept evolution as a scientific idea and as a fact based on the evidence," he said. "My belief in God is based on my faith.

"It's bad logic to conclude that God doesn't exist when you never considered him in doing the work."

But it's equally bad logic to conclude scientists reject God because a divine creator isn't a necessary part of scientific theory.

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If **Buckingham** is successful, the Dover school district will be the only one in York County teaching intelligent design. Officials from other districts say teachers are prepared to discuss creationism if the issue is raised by students, but nowhere is it part of the curriculum.

But Dover Area School Board member Noel Wenrich says whether **Buckingham** will get support from the rest of the board depends on what he proposes.

Like **Buckingham**, Wenrich supports making "Pandas" available to students searching for other answers.

But he doesn't support the actual teaching of the textbook in class unless it's needed to balance the other books, such as Charles Darwin's "Origin of Species."

Wenrich characterizes the two arguments as "intelligent design" and "the primordial soup."

And in the end, he said, faith plays a role in all our decisions, even in science. "You can call it faith, or you can call it exploring other opportunities," he said. Reach Lauri Lebo at 771-2092 or llebo@ydr.com.

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York Dispatch, The (PA)

September 8, 2004

Section: LOCAL NEWS

Biology issue lingers

Author: *HEIDI BERNHARD-BUBB* <i>For The York Dispatch</i>

Article Text:

The Dover Area School Board still is considering purchase of a companion textbook to teach creationism as part of the district's high school biology curriculum.

Superintendent Richard Nilsen said the book -- "Of Pandas and People: The Central Question of Biological Origins" -- is under review by the school board, staff and district curriculum committee, but he said he had no idea when the issue would come up for a vote.

It took two votes after a heated discussion last month for the divided school board to approve the 2004 edition of "Prentice Hall Biology," which had offended several board members because it teaches evolution without reference to creationism.

Board member **William Buckingham** proposed the district also purchase "Of Pandas and People," saying it would balance the curriculum and teach an alternate theory to evolution.

The book, originally published by the Foundation for Thought and Ethics in 1989, presents the theory of "intelligent design" and questions the science behind Darwin's theory of evolution.

Buckingham said it is important to distinguish between the concept of creationism, which refers to God and the creation story in the Bible, and intelligent design, which states that some being caused life to begin somehow. He said the distinction is important because intelligent design is not specific to one religion.

Although **Buckingham** said last month he thought the biology text could not be approved without the companion text, he said last night he is confident "Of Pandas and People" will be approved and is pleased with the review process.

At the Aug. 3 meeting **Buckingham** and members Sheila Harkins, Angie Yingling, and Heather Geesey first voted against the biology text, with members Jeff Brown, Casey Brown, Noel Wenrich, and Alan Bonsell voting for approval of the text. Board member Jane Cleaver was absent, and the motion was defeated on a 4-4 vote.

12/31/2004

"I would like to see the Bible used as a reference book in the classroom," she said. "We took the Bible and prayer out of our classrooms and look at how kids are today. We showed more respect when I was in school."

District parent Linda Handel was also glad for the change, saying students need to learn more than that they evolved from animals.

Nianna Cullum went a step further and said she would even accept a tax increase to help the district fight the matter in court. But that's where some parents drew the line.

"I'm OK with it until there's a lawsuit," Keller said. "I believe people should be allowed to express their opinions but I don't want to see my tax dollars being used in a court fight."

"Our taxes are high enough," said district parent Nathan Richmond. "And more than that, I want my children to believe what I believe, not what the government tells them."

High school student Jesse Platts thought the board's decision was, "awesome." As a member of the school Bible Club, he said it wouldn't bother him at all to have a discussion about creation in the classroom so long as the teacher didn't go too far.

"They can't be too strong on it," he said. "They still have to let us decide what is right."

Senior Robert Kettermann just shrugged his shoulders.

"Whatever," he said. "School, church, they're both the same thing. I know it's against the law to talk about God in school, but so what if it gets mixed in."

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York Daily Record (PA)

September 8, 2004

Section: LOCAL

Page: 01, 03

'Of Pandas' is shelved, for now The Dover Area School Board didn't discuss the textbook controversy.

Author: LAURI LEBO; Daily Record/Sunday News

Article Text:

Dover Area School Board members said it's premature to discuss whether a controversial textbook that teaches the concept of a divine creator belongs in a district biology class.

William Buckingham, the head of the board's curriculum committee, said last week he planned to introduce the book "Of Pandas and People: The Central Question of Biological Origins" to the district, proposing it as a companion text to the approved biology book.

But at Tuesday night's meeting, board President Alan Bonsell said the issue was not on the agenda and would not be discussed. Later, he said the board is still researching the book and how it might be used in the classroom before bringing it up for public debate.

But Buckingham said just because it wasn't brought up at the board meeting doesn't mean the issue has gone away.

Board members are still "fine tuning" matters, he said, including any potential legal issues that might arise from using "Of Pandas" in the classroom.

"I can't say much right now," Buckingham said during a break in the meeting, but he vowed to revisit the issue in October.

"Of Pandas," by Percival Davis and Dean H. Kenyon, addresses the concept of "intelligent design," or ID - the idea that life was created by a divine hand and is too complex to be the result of evolutionary chance. Because God is not actually mentioned, the book's proponents say it does not violate the First Amendment's clause prohibiting the establishment of religion.

But many scientists and critics say the book and the ID concept are merely vehicles to get religion in the back door since the U.S. Supreme Court's 1987 ruling prohibiting equal time for the teaching of creationism in public school science class.

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Several residents, including retired science teachers, showed up at the meeting to speak out against bringing the book to Dover.

Irene Jurbala-Austin told the board that in her 35 years of teaching biology, she knows of no student who has had a crisis of religious faith from being taught evolutionary theory.

She wondered if the purpose of the book isn't just to reach out to students who might not believe in a higher being.

"That's evangelism," she said, and doesn't belong in science class.

Barrie Callahan, a district resident and former school board member, said the idea of introducing "Of Pandas" to biology class is "just one more embarrassment for Dover."

During the meeting, Callahan questioned Bonsell on whether the board would announce publicly that a vote is planned at least one meeting before it happens, giving the public time to respond.

Both Callahan and Jurbala-Austin are concerned that the board, to avoid controversy, will try to approve adding the book to the district's curriculum behind closed doors.

"Oh, Lord, it's a little too late for that," Bonsell responded. He said the board isn't trying to do anything out of the public eye and pointed out that the issue of creationism has been hotly debated in the district over the past several months. Reach Lauri L. Reach Lauri Lebo at 771-2092 or llebo@ydr.com.

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12/31/2004

Controversial bio book allowed

The 'intelligent design' book is approved for Dover schools as 'reference' material.

By JOSEPH MALDONADO
For the Daily Record/Sunday News
Tuesday, October 5, 2004

After months of trying, the Dover Area School District has figured out a way to introduce "intelligent design" theory into the classroom.

Supt. Richard Nilsen approved the donation of 50 copies "Of Pandas and People," published by the Foundation for Thought and Ethics, as a reference book for the classroom.

The book, which focuses on intelligent design, was originally published in 1989 and questions the science behind Darwin's theory of evolution.

Earlier this year, the school board discussed replacing its biology books with ones that taught intelligent design and/or creationism. The debate came after the book "Biology," published by Prentice Hall, was rejected by the school board, despite the science department's recommendation.

"The book is laced with Darwinism," board member William Buckingham said at the time. Buckingham is the head of the board's curriculum committee

In August, the board deadlocked on a vote for "Biology." But after a heated debate among board members and a public outcry from people saying that religion did not belong in the classroom, Angie Yingling changed her vote and the book passed.

Still, that did not stop the district from allowing "Pandas" to be used as reference material. And because the book was labeled as reference, its use in the classroom did not require an approval vote by the board.

The agenda said "Pandas" would be made available to all students.

Former board member Lonny Langione asked if that meant teachers were going to be required to teach intelligent design.

"No," replied Nilsen. "A teacher can, but is not required."

Then Langione asked who was going to train teachers to answer "intelligent design" questions. Nilsen said if a teacher requested training on how to handle questions, the district would provide it.

In other news:

Two board members, Noel Wenrich and Jane Cleaver, announced they will resign from the board in November.

Wenrich will be moving after accepting a job in the East Lancaster County School District as a computer technician.

Cleaver has decided to move to Florida.

An advertisement seeking candidates to replace Wenrich and Cleaver will be made public soon. The board hopes to fill the positions by the start of the December meetings.

Pandas' book prompts concerns; Students and parents feel that personal beliefs about God and creation could be influenced by the book's content.;

JOSEPH MALDONADO. York Daily Record. York, Pa.: Oct 7, 2004. pg. 4

Abstract (Document Summary)

The recent decision by Dover Area School District Supt. Richard Nilsen to allow 50 copies of "Of Pandas and People" into the classroom as a reference book was seen as a victory for those seeking to integrate religion and science.

In August, the Prentice Hall biology text was approved after heated debate. "Pandas" was also discussed as a companion text but was voted down. Because the book, published by the Foundation for Thought and Ethics, presents the possibility that a deity might have created the universe, the board decided against it for fear of a lawsuit demanding separation of church and state.

Her mother, Betty Small, said she was much more comfortable with [Sarah Small] getting her religious guidance from her or her church. But she also said she could live with the "Pandas" book if the district could promise there would be no endorsement of any particular religion.

Full Text (533 words)

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The recent decision by Dover Area School District Supt. Richard Nilsen to allow 50 copies of "Of Pandas and People" into the classroom as a reference book was seen as a victory for those seeking to integrate religion and science.

But the book, which promotes the idea that there is evidence of "intelligent design" in the universe, has left at least one student concerned that her relationship with God and her views of creation will now be laced with government influence.

"My church has already taught me about creation," said Sarah Small, a 13-year-old eighth-grader. "I don't want to be confused by anything the school teaches."

While discussing the adoption of new biology books this past June, school board member William Buckingham said "Biology," published by Prentice Hall, was "laced with Darwinism." To help balance Darwin's teachings of evolution and natural selection, Buckingham began looking for books that also taught a creation theory of the universe.

In August, the Prentice Hall biology text was approved after heated debate. "Pandas" was also discussed as a companion text but was voted down. Because the book, published by the Foundation for Thought and Ethics, presents the possibility that a deity might have created the universe, the board decided against it for fear of a lawsuit demanding separation of church and state.

But an anonymous donor provided copies of the "Pandas" book, to be used as a reference text for interested students.

In addition to her fear about having her religious beliefs contradicted by the school district, Sarah had another concern.

"I'm worried that students who don't believe in the school's God or a Christian God will get harassed because of their different beliefs," she said.

Her mother, Betty Small, said she was much more comfortable with Sarah getting her religious guidance from

her or her church. But she also said she could live with the "Pandas" book if the district could promise there would be no endorsement of any particular religion.

"I do have a concern that one day a teacher will tell their students that something is absolutely right or absolutely wrong," she said.

While Small insisted that the name of no god be mentioned, 15-year-old freshman Alex Haga said he was OK with "Pandas" as long as every god got equal time. "Maybe it will break some stereotypes that people have about other religions," he said.

District mother Tina O'Leary said she, too, was OK with the new reference book, but voiced words of caution. "They can't go too far with this," she said. "As long as teachers talk about God in general terms and don't give it a name, I guess I'm fine with it."

One of her daughters, Victoria O'Leary, a 15-year-old freshman, agreed, adding, "A discussion (about creation) in the classroom may be the only time some kids ever hear about God."

But her twin sister, Faith, said she would rather get creation information from her family or church. "That's just what I would be comfortable with," she said.

QUOTE: I do have a concern that one day a teacher will tell their students that something is absolutely right or absolutely wrong.' DOVER AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT PARENT

Credit: York Daily Record

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'Intelligent design' voted in

As now written, Dover Area science curriculum will require the theory to be taught, said a biology teacher.

By JOSEPH MALDONADO
For the Daily Record/Sunday News
Tuesday, October 19, 2004

The Dover Area School Board voted to add "Intelligent Design Theory" to the district's biology curriculum Monday evening just two weeks after Supt. Richard Nilsen assured former board member Lonnie Langione that wouldn't happen.

The change passed by a six-to-three margin after a heated discussion by the board and a dozen members of the community.

During the Oct. 4 board meeting, Langione asked Nilsen if teachers would be required to teach "intelligent design," after he allowed 50 copies of the book "Of Pandas and People," published by the Foundation for Thought and Ethics, to be used in science classrooms as reference books.

"No," replied Nilsen at the time. "A teacher can, but is not required."

But during Monday's meeting, district biology teacher Jen Miller said the new curriculum wording implies that she will be required to teach "intelligent design."

The new wording in the curriculum states: "Students will be made aware of gaps/problems in Darwin's Theory and of other theories of evolution including, but not limited to, intelligent design. Note: Origins of life will not be taught."

For more than an hour, outgoing board member Noel Wenrich tried to amend the wording in an effort to remove the words, "intelligent design." But through each of his four attempts, his motions failed.

Voting to approve the final version were William Buckingham, Alan Bonsell, Sheila Harkins, Heather Geesey, Jane Cleaver and Angie Yingling. Voting against it were Wenrich, Carol Brown and Jeff Brown.

At the end of the meeting, a tearful Carol Brown read a statement before resigning from the board. She said that

on more than one occasion she had been asked if she were, "born again," referring to the Christian term for salvation.

"No one has — nor should have — the right to ask that of a fellow board member," she read. "An individual's religious beliefs should have no impact on his or her ability to serve as a school board director."

Eleven members of the community spoke before the vote with only one, Eric Riddle, encouraging the board to include "intelligent design" in the curriculum.

"It may cost us a little money to do what's right," Riddle said, referring to potential lawsuits that may ensue. "But maybe someday, I can feel good about putting my kids in this district."

Riddle currently homeschools his children.

Lawsuits were a fear of just about everyone speaking against the curriculum change. Buckingham said if a lawsuit were brought against the district, a firm would provide free representation for the district. But for the second meeting in a row, he did not mention the firm.

The district solicitor was not at the meeting.

Carol Brown said that just because a firm mentioned by Buckingham might be willing to represent the board, doesn't mean they would represent faculty members. She said if faculty asked, they would be entitled to representation from the district solicitor, Stock and Leader.

"If they requested Stock and Leader, they (the faculty) should be fired," said board member Heather Geesey. "They agreed to the book and the changes in curriculum."

But Miller and science department head Bertha Spahr said Geesey's statement wasn't true. Spahr said the faculty only agreed to the 'Pandas' book as a compromise to address Buckingham's concern that students have alternate materials to study in addition to their regular text.

Spahr also said that not only did her department not approve the new wording, they were not invited to help write it.

"We didn't know you were going to do this," she said.

The administration said it too did not support the change as it was written. The board recommended something very similar that did not include any reference to "intelligent design."

After the meeting ended, Wenrich, who in addition to Jane Cleaver, also resigned two weeks ago but for personal reasons, had a short shouting match with Buckingham who had challenged people's literacy, knowledge of American history and patriotism throughout the night.

"During my resignation speech, I said we needed to disagree without being nasty," he said. "But nasty is what we got."

Parents react to decision

Some don't mind religion in school. Others fear costly litigation.

By JOSEPH MALDONADO
For the Daily Record/Sunday News
Wednesday, October 20, 2004

There were a lot of comments speaking out against the Dover Area School Board's decision to allow intelligent design to be added to the district's biology curriculum Monday evening.

But while that reaction was negative, the response outside the meeting in Dover was supportive.

"Science has evidence about where we came from as do the Christians," said district parent Darin Keller. "Why shouldn't students be able to talk about both?"

Those speaking out at the meeting took exception to the emphasis the board placed on intelligent design.

Former board member Larry Snook read a passage from the reference book chosen to support classroom discussions on intelligent design, "Of Pandas and People," published by the Foundation for Thought and Ethics.

On page 148, the book states that there is "impressive" evidence to support that living things are the product of intelligent design. He said the passage could lead to a discussion on the origins of life, especially as it pertains to a 'designer' or god.

Snook has repeatedly said that such a discussion would put the district in violation of the laws regarding the separation of church and state, thereby setting the district up to be sued.

But on Tuesday, board member Heather Geesey disagreed.

"We are not going to be sued," she said. "It's not going to be a problem. I have confidence in the district's lawyers."

While waiting for her children to get out of school on Tuesday, district parent June Keefer said she was glad the board decided to incorporate creation into the biology curriculum.

"I would like to see the Bible used as a reference book in the classroom," she said. "We took the Bible and prayer out of our classrooms and look at how kids are today. We showed more respect when I was in school."

District parent Linda Handel was also glad for the change, saying students need to learn more than that they evolved from animals.

Nianna Cullum went a step further and said she would even accept a tax increase to help the district fight the matter in court. But that's where some parents drew the line.

"I'm OK with it until there's a lawsuit," Keller said. "I believe people should be allowed to express their opinions but I don't want to see my tax dollars being used in a court fight."

"Our taxes are high enough," said district parent Nathan Richmond. "And more than that, I want my children to believe what I believe, not what the government tells them."

High school student Jesse Platts thought the board's decision was, "awesome." As a member of the school Bible Club, he said it wouldn't bother him at all to have a discussion about creation in the classroom so long as the teacher didn't go too far.

"They can't be too strong on it," he said. "They still have to let us decide what is right."

Senior Robert Kettermann just shrugged his shoulders.

"Whatever," he said. "School, church, they're both the same thing. I know it's against the law to talk about God in school, but so what if it gets mixed in."

Dover curriculum move likely a first

Even some supporters of intelligent design suggest the board might have overstepped.

By LAURI LERO and JOE MALDONADO
Daily Record/Sunday News
Wednesday, October 20, 2004

When the Dover Area School Board voted to require the teaching of intelligent design Monday night, it likely became the first district in the United States to do so.

Until now, the battleground over intelligent design — the theory that all life was created by a divine being — has been largely fought in states such as Kansas and Ohio.

But with Dover's 6-to-3 vote in favor of teaching alternative theories to evolution, "including, but not limited to, intelligent design," the battle lines might have shifted to include York County.

Eugenie Scott, director of the California-based National Center for Science Education, an organization that closely monitors challenges to evolutionary theory, has been following the issue in Dover since June.

Both she and her counterparts at the Seattle-based Discovery Institute — a staunch proponent of intelligent design — say this is the first time they know of where a school district has required the teaching of the theory.

Scott said she believes intelligent design proponents are now looking for a test case to defend the issue in court.

"And Dover may be that guinea pig," she said.

School board member Bill Buckingham is the chief architect of Dover's newly revised biology curriculum that states "Students will be made aware of gaps/problems in Darwin's Theory and of other theories of evolution including, but not limited to, intelligent design. Note: Origins of life will not be taught."

The devout Christian admitted that before presenting the revised curriculum to the board, he had been talking to a conservative Michigan law firm that is interested in defending an intelligent design legal challenge.

But he said those on the other side of the debate are also

interested in a battle on the issue as well.

"We just happen to be at the head of the pack right now," he said. "So it might be us."

Buckingham said Tuesday night that he has been promised legal support by the Ann Arbor-based Thomas More Law Center, a law firm that champions such issues as school prayer and "promoting public morality."

But those at the Discovery Institute, who have also advised Buckingham on the issue, said the board member might have overstepped his bounds.

John West, Discovery's associate director for science and culture, said intelligent design is still a fairly new concept. Consequently, he said, his organization prefers that school districts require the full, fair teaching of evolution, including the flaws.

"We don't endorse or support what the Dover School District has done," West said. "This is not what we recommend."

Buckingham agreed he had been in touch with the Discovery Institute, but when the idea of establishing intelligent design as part of the curriculum emerged, he turned to the law center.

No one at the Thomas More Law Center returned phone calls for comment Tuesday.

However, both the American Civil Liberties Union and Americans United for Separation of Church and State — who say they are closely monitoring the situation in Dover — point out that if the school district were to lose a legal battle, its taxpayers could end up footing the plaintiff's costly legal bills.

"My response to that is what price is freedom?" Buckingham said. "Sometimes you have to take a stand."

* * *

The issue began in June when Buckingham rejected a biology textbook because, he said, "it was laced with Darwinism."

Soon after, he suggested the book, "Of Pandas and People:

The Central question of Biological Origins" be used in biology class as a supplement to any textbook.

Two weeks ago, after much controversy, anonymous sources donated 50 copies of the "Pandas" book to Dover Area High School to be used as a reference materials.

At the same time, the board curriculum committee met several times with Assistant Supt. Michael Baksa and a group of teachers over the past six months. They talked about everything from the "Pandas" book, intelligent design and evolution.

Board members directed the teachers to come up with a change in the curriculum that would open the door for discussion about competing theories to evolution, Baksa said.

They also said they wanted to change the curriculum to say there were problems with Darwin's theory of evolution.

But the sentence about intelligent design was added by committee members Buckingham, Alan Bonsell and Sheila Harkins at a meeting not attended by district staff.

After seeing the revision, Baksa said, teachers took it out, but board members put it back in before Tuesday's meeting.

Ultimately, Scott said, the problem is that the theory of intelligent design depends on a creator.

"They're not talking little green men, this is God," she said. "Intelligent design is just a sham to get creationism into the curriculum."

However, Scott said, the curriculum requirement is so poorly worded that teachers who oppose teaching intelligent design can take advantage of it.

The way the sentence reads, teachers appear to be actually required to teach the "gaps/problems" in intelligent design, she said.

Scott said the intelligent design movement is politically motivated and has little standing with the mainstream scientific community.

"But even if they haven't convinced the scientific community, they have been able to convince the politicians," she said of Buckingham and other school board members across the country.

"And that's too bad for the students in Dover," Scott said.

Reach Lauri Lebo at 771-2092 or llebo@ydr.com.

'INTELLIGENT DESIGN' ISSUE

The concept of "intelligent design," is the idea that many aspects of life are too complex to have occurred randomly and therefore must have been created by a divine being. Its supporters say teaching it in the classroom is about fairness, giving equal time to competing theories.

But others argue intelligent design is an attempt to introduce creationism through the back door and violates the First Amendment's prohibition against the state establishment of religion.

The U.S. Supreme Court last ruled on the subject in 1987, when it determined a Louisiana law requiring creationism to be given equal time to evolution was unconstitutional "because (the law) lacks a clear secular purpose."

The concept of intelligent design emerged after the 17-year-old ruling, and its teaching in the schools has not yet been addressed by the courts.

[top](#)

Creation debate draws in teachers

Dover science instructors prepare to discuss 'intelligent design'

By JOSEPH MALDONADO
For the Daily Record/Sunday News
Sunday, October 24, 2004

The question of who or what created the Earth is controversial. So, too, is the recent decision by the Dover Area School Board concerning what to teach in the district's biology classrooms.

During its regular board meeting on Oct. 18, the board voted 6-3 to allow changes to the biology curriculum that reads as follows: "Students will be made aware of gaps/problems in Darwin's Theory and of other theories of evolution including, but not limited to intelligent design. Note: Origins of life will not be taught."

The opportunity for discussion falls on Day Six of a 19-day section of biology called, "The Study of Life." During this 90-minute period, students will discuss Darwin's Origins of Species and its flaws.

The discussion will also be opened up to talk about competing theories, specifically "Intelligent Design." Supporting that discussion will be the book, "Of Pandas and People," published by the Foundation for Thought and Ethics.

At an Oct. 4 school board meeting, Supt. Richard Nilsen approved the donation of more than 50 "Panda" books to be used as reference.

Assistant Supt. Michael Baksa said on Thursday that the decision to put the books in the classroom was an act of compromise to the board. As to why they needed 50 books, he said the board was firm in its desire to ensure that every student who had a question about intelligent design could get an answer.

But students won't just be getting their answers from the book. Because intelligent design is named in the curriculum, teachers will be expected to answer questions about the theory.

This poses a problem, because generally, universities and college don't offer anything about intelligent design in

their teacher degree programs. This is because it may be that no district other than Dover requires it in their classrooms.

"If teachers request training on the subject, we will provide it," Baksa said.

But not everything on the subject. If the discussion turns to things relating to the origins of life, teachers must take a pass. Because students may not phrase the question in exactly that way, Baksa said the administration will be having meetings to plan how teachers will address that and other "gray-area" issues that might be religious in nature.

One idea is to create a pre-emptive handout with answers to such questions the district expects students might ask.

"Or to fulfill the curriculum requirements, it might be enough to say to the students in one line that there are other theories of evolution including, but not limited to intelligent design, and let it go at that," Baksa said.

Resistance to the move

While there has been some support over the last six months for the board's attempts to incorporate intelligent design into the classroom, there has been significantly more resistance displayed at public meetings.

They range from general members of the community to ministers, parents, faculty, staff and the administration.

The biggest problem, they say, is that it proposes that the universe, and all things in it, were created by a "designer" during an act of creation.

Many in the opposition have said that title of designer is a thinly veiled synonym for God. As such, they say that this type of teaching opens the door for lawsuits over the constitutional separation of church and state.

Former board members, such as Barrie Callahan, Lonny Langione and Larry Snook, have been outspoken critics of the current board, particularly member William Buckingham. Buckingham is viewed as the driving force behind the intelligent design movement.

On Oct. 21, Snook said he wasn't surprised that the board

voted to approve a day to teach creation.

"I believe there's more going on than what we can see," he said. "I still feel as though this board isn't finished with its creation agenda."

Board members resign

In 2003, Snook resigned from the board because he believed there was a majority of people on it that didn't listen to his ideas concerning building renovations that, at the time, were being planned in the district.

"I was in a minority that wasn't being heard," he said. "The board can be like that sometimes."

After the Oct. 18 meeting, board members Carol and Jeffrey Brown resigned, giving a similar explanation.

"There were board members that simply stopped confiding in me," Jeffrey Brown said. "They had this single-minded objective and they didn't care what I had to say about it."

In the spring, Jeffrey Brown said he is going to run again for a seat on the board. While it may seem strange to resign, only to immediately decide to run again, Brown said he has his reasons.

"First of all, I no longer want to have my name associated with the actions this board is taking," he said. "I also want to run again because I want to feel a new affirmation from the voters that my opinion matters to them."

His wife hasn't said whether she'll be running again, but said she will be at every meeting.

"I will not leave quietly from these issues," she said. "I will be louder than before, because there are things I can say now that I couldn't say before at public meetings."

Neither Brown said that they regretted resigning from the board, but Jeffrey Brown said he regretted that it came to that.

Another board member who resigned, but for personal reasons, was Noel Wenrich.

Unlike the Browns, who were unhappy that "Pandas"

made it into the classroom even as a reference book, Wenrich supported the idea and that of intelligent design in the classroom. But it was the manner in which certain members of the board dealt with other concerned parties that angered Wenrich.

"The fact that teachers were cut out of the decision, the fact that they were made irrelevant bothers me to no end," he said. "After they compromised with us to allow a book they were uncomfortable with into the classroom only to be treated the way they were, well, I don't know why they would ever work with the board again like that in the future."

The action item was placed on the agenda with only the indication that there was going to be a vote for change to the biology curriculum. No specific mention was made that the change had anything to do with intelligent design.

The agenda did mention the changes were written in an enclosure, but it was not made readily available to the public before the meeting. Often, the board approves items with enclosures without stating the nature of them.

Once the audience was made aware of the potential change, 10 of the 11 who addressed the issue spoke out against it. They had many questions about the legality of the change and were dismayed that the district solicitor was not on hand to field questions.

Concern over legal challenge

During the meeting, member Sheila Harkins said she had been assured by the solicitor that the changes were legal.

And if they were to be challenged in court, Buckingham said a law firm in Michigan would represent them for free.

But these statements were of little comfort to Jere Wynegar, from the Pennsylvania State Education Association. He called the change "an affront" to the Constitution and cited several Supreme Court cases upholding his views about his perception that religion was about to enter Dover's classrooms.

In response to Wynegar's statement, Buckingham said, "Those who mention religion are just against intelligent design."

In addition to the church and state issue, former board member Barrie Callahan read scientific text from the "Pandas" book, which she described as being outdated 20 years.

"You know how to read," Buckingham said. "What's your point?"

No one seems to know for sure where this issue is headed next. But many did weigh in on where they think the district is today.

"This is a victory for the students," Buckingham said after the meeting.

"The district is divided," Snook said.

"I think the board may have more of this type of thing in mind right now," Jeffrey Brown said. "That's my gut speaking."

Creationist discusses views on the origins of human life; Jim Mackay spent last week at Calvary Bible Church speaking about his beliefs.;

JOSEPH MALDONADO. York Daily Record. York, Pa.: Nov 1, 2004. pg. 3

Abstract (Document Summary)

In his lectures, Mackay noted that he has been following the Dover Area School Board's decision to have intelligent design theory added to its biology curriculum. In an interview, Mackay applauded the decision but said he doubted it would stand up to a court challenge.

In addition to conducting his own global geological surveys, Mackay has lectured in geology at the college level in Australia. His research and experience have led him to conclude that the earth is not billions of years old, as Darwin's Theory of Origins teaches, but closer to 6,000 years old in accordance with Biblical teaching.

On Sunday, during the church's morning service, Mackay quoted Genesis 1:1-2 to explain that the earth, from Day 1, was covered in water. On the third day, God summoned dry land to appear. The Bible counters those who argue there wasn't enough water to cover the earth during Noah's flood, Mackay said.

Full Text (636 words)

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Even among those who believe creationism should be taught in public schools, there is trepidation and concern about how well it can be taught.

The goal, they say, is to ensure students hear the truth about all of the events that have led up to this moment in time, even if the teachers entrusted with delivering the creation message don't believe it themselves.

"To be honest, I think most teachers know very little about evolution or creation," said John Mackay, international director of Creation Research in Capalaba, Queensland, Australia. "More often than not, teachers are simply reading to students from a science text book rather than teaching them anything."

Mackay spent the last week as a guest of the Calvary Bible Church in East Prospect. There, he lectured, as he has around the world, on Noah's Flood and other evidence supporting the premise that God is responsible for all things in existence.

In his lectures, Mackay noted that he has been following the Dover Area School Board's decision to have intelligent design theory added to its biology curriculum. In an interview, Mackay applauded the decision but said he doubted it would stand up to a court challenge.

At its Oct. 18 meeting, the Dover Area School Board voted 6-3 to allow changes to the biology curriculum that reads as follows: "Students will be made aware of gaps/problems in Darwin's Theory and of other theories of evolution including, but not limited to intelligent design. Note: Origins of life will not be taught."

Dover Area School Board member Sheila Harkins has said she has been assured by the board's solicitor that the changes were legal.

Mackay said he had no intention of trying to reach any board members in Dover, and none attended the Sunday services.

In addition to conducting his own global geological surveys, Mackay has lectured in geology at the college level in Australia. His research and experience have led him to conclude that the earth is not billions of years old, as Darwin's Theory of Origins teaches, but closer to 6,000 years old in accordance with Biblical teaching.

During his week with Calvary Bible, Mackay did several lectures explaining how the dinosaurs came and went in this short period of time and also explained how Darwin's theory has not only misled generations of students, but has kept them from finding the salvation of Jesus Christ.

He said Moses wrote the story of creation, and cited scripture that said those who do not believe the teachings of Moses do not believe in Christ.

On Sunday, during the church's morning service, Mackay quoted Genesis 1:1-2 to explain that the earth, from Day 1, was covered in water. On the third day, God summoned dry land to appear. The Bible counters those who argue there wasn't enough water to cover the earth during Noah's flood, Mackay said.

A majority of those listening to Mackay thought his arguments on behalf of creation were at least as compelling as those offered by evolutionists.

Laura Sabol has a 14-year-old son, Kyle Sabol, who is a ninth-grader at Eastern York High School.

"This is not a separation of church and state issue," Laura Sabol said. "It's a truth issue."

She also said she realizes that not everyone will believe the Christian version is truth. In addition to Christian views of creation in the classroom, she said she believes other faith-based versions should be taught as well.

Her son agreed.

"I wouldn't be offended," he said. "Learning means hearing about all points of view."

Joe Fauth, the church's senior pastor, said he knows that if the door is opened for the beliefs of one religion, it most likely will be opened to all religions.

"That's the American way, isn't it?" he asked after Mackay's second morning sermon.

MUG: Mackay

Credit: York Daily Record

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People: Mackay, Jim
Section: LOCAL
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Apology demanded at Dover schools meeting

The school board released the names of candidates to fill recently vacated board positions.

By JOSEPH MALDONADO
For the Daily Record/Sunday News
Tuesday, November 2, 2004

Former Dover Area School Board president Noel Wenrich demanded an apology from fellow board member William Buckingham on Monday night, saying he didn't appreciate the way he challenged his patriotism and religious beliefs during an Oct. 18 school board meeting.

"My religion is between myself, my God and my pastor," Wenrich said at the meeting. During the Oct. 18 meeting, Wenrich made several attempts to change the wording to a curriculum change that ultimately passed allowing intelligent design theory — the theory that all life was created by a divine being — to be taught in the district's biology classrooms. It was during Wenrich's motions that exchanges between Buckingham and Wenrich became heated.

After receiving no apology and a warning from board member Sheila Harkins that he was out of line, Wenrich stormed out of the meeting Monday and did not return. Wenrich submitted his formal resignation during the Oct. 18 meeting and said from the parking lot Monday that he regretted his tenure on the board ended the way it did.

"I wasn't going to sit there while the board insults me as it has other members of the public," Wenrich said from the parking lot. "It's funny how Bill (Buckingham) can say whatever he wants without ever being out of line."

As public comments continued, former board member Barrie Callahan requested access to the board's recorded tapes made during the Oct. 18 meeting to confirm board comments that she read about.

Resident Bryan Rehm also requested to hear the tapes because he had to leave the Oct. 18 meeting early. Like Callahan, he wanted to confirm comments he had heard about.

In the past, Supt. Richard Nilsen said the district did have a practice that allowed access, but not a formal policy.

Bonsell said the district's solicitor advised against releasing the Oct. 18 tapes to protect members of the board from potential legal actions.

After the Monday meeting, in which the minutes of the Oct. 18 meeting were approved, Bonsell said the tapes would be destroyed. He also said, for the three years he has been on the board, meeting tapes have always been destroyed after the approval of the minutes.

"The board adopts the minutes as their public record," Nilsen said.

Potential candidates named

The district made public the names of seven candidates who have applied to fill the vacancies left by departed board members Carol Brown, Jeffrey Brown, Jane Cleaver and Noel Wenrich.

The candidates are:

Michael Arnold, Cynthia Corbett, Terry Emig, Sherrie Leber, Monica Marlowe, Bryan Rehm and Bernadette Reinking.

Other requests

Former board member Casey Brown asked the board to reconsider the intelligent design change in the biology curriculum. She suggested an optional class called "Religions of the World," which would meet the board's goal of broadening student learning beyond theories of evolution. The board did not comment on her suggestion.

Former board member Larry Snook requested the identity of those who donated the 50 intelligent design reference books, "Of Pandas and People."

"You owe it to the community," he said. "Furthermore, those who support intelligent design deserve to know their benefactor."

The board did not comment on Snook's request.

From: owner-palegal@inia.cis.org on behalf of Nick Matzke [matzke@ncseweb.org]
Sent: Tuesday, November 02, 2004 5:47 PM
To: palegal@ncseweb2.org
Subject: [palegal] Decision to destroy Dover meeting tapes?

Hopefully you've seen this:

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Dover says meeting tapes not public
<http://www.yorkdispatch.com/Stories/D,1413,138%7E10023%7E2506118,00.html>

By HEIDI BERNHARD-BUBB For The York Dispatch

Dover Area School District officials are refusing to allow residents to hear audio recordings made of the Oct. 18 school board meeting, saying the tapes are not public records under the state's Right To Know Law.

Although the meetings are public, Superintendent Richard Nilsen said according to the district's attorney, Stock and Leader, the minutes of the meeting, prepared by the board secretary, are the official public record of the meeting, and the tapes are considered nonpublic.

Board president Alan Bonsell said the tapes are destroyed after the minutes are prepared and the board had never given them to the public during his three years on the board.

He added that the district's counsel had said the records were not public because of "potential legal action," but would not elaborate on what that action might be.

The board was to vote last night on allowing the public to listen to the recordings of the Oct. 18 meeting "under district supervision," but pulled the item from the agenda.

Nilsen said one other request to listen to an audio recording has been made in his three years as superintendent. He said the board's "past practice" was to allow the public to hear the tapes, but there is no official policy.

He said the change in practice was the board's decision and he could not speak to why that decision had been made.

However, several residents are questioning whether the board is within its legal rights to keep the tapes private.

Former board members Larry Snook and Lonny Langione confirmed the tapes have always been destroyed after the minutes are prepared, but if someone asked to listen to them before they were erased there would be no reason to keep them private.

-- Reach Heidi Bernhard-Bubb at 854-1575 or news@yorkdispatch.com.

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**

* This is the PALEGAL mailing list (palegal@ncseweb2.org). The purpose
* of the list is to discuss science education issues in Pennsylvania, primarily
* the current controversy surrounding teaching evolution, "intelligent design" and
* the ID textbook "Of Pandas and People" in the Dover/York area.

* All posts are confidential and privileged. Users must obtain permission in
* writing from the author before disclosing or redistributing.

* The list administrator is Nick Matzke at NCSE (matzke@ncseweb.org). New list
* members can be added to the list if approved by a current list member, and if
* they agree to be added after being made aware of the list purpose and
* confidentiality rules.

* To remove yourself from this list send:
* unsubscribe palegal youremail@address.here
* to: majordomo@ncseweb2.org

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171 of 179 DOCUMENTS

Copyright 2004
The York Dispatch (York, PA)

November 2, 2004 Tuesday

SECTION: LOCAL NEWS

LENGTH: 490 words

HEADLINE: 'Design' bedevils school board

BYLINE: HEIDI BERNHARD-BUBB *For The York Dispatch*

BODY:

Dover Area School Board's decision two weeks ago requiring **intelligent design** theory to be included as a high school biology reference text dominated last night's board meeting with former board members criticizing the move and one denouncing others on the panel and quitting the meeting.

Noel Wenrich stormed out of what would have been his last meeting as a board member after he demanded an apology from fellow board member William Buckingham. Wenrich said that he and residents in the audience had been personally attacked and insulted at the last meeting by Buckingham and by the board.

"I was referred to as unpatriotic, and my religious beliefs were questioned. I served in the U.S. Army for 11 years and six years on this board, 17 years of my life have been devoted to public service ... and my religion is personal, its between me, God and my pastor," said Wenrich.

Board president Alan Bonsell told Wenrich he was out of line and making comments of a personal nature, which he had asked the public to avoid at the beginning of the meeting, saying that he was disappointed in the conduct of some board members and residents at the meeting two weeks ago. Nearly 50 people attended the meeting.

Wenrich was asked to leave the podium and shouted from the front of the room that he had enjoyed his service, but could "no longer sit with these people" and left the meeting.

Buckingham made no comment.

Wenrich and Jane Cleaver resigned last month because they are moving out of the district. They were joined by Casey Brown and Jeff Brown, who resigned at the last meeting in protest against the board's choice to require the teaching of **intelligent design**.

Casey Brown and Larry Snook last night took a more conciliatory tone than Wenrich, but still questioned whether the board was heading in the right direction.

Snook said the board was dividing the community and should disclose the identity of members of the community who donated 50 copies of the **intelligent design** text "Of Pandas and People," the text supporting **intelligent design**, to the district to be available as a reference.

Brown suggested that the board rescind its decision on **intelligent design**, but offer an elective class on religions of the world so that students could be exposed to all of the world's faiths.

At the last meeting, the board voted 6-3 to add **intelligent design** theory to the district's biology curriculum as a reference text.

The York Dispatch (York, PA) November 2, 2004 Tuesday

The decision could make Dover a national test case over what can be taught in public schools. Stakeholders on both sides of the argument are now watching to see what will happen, with opponents saying they may sue the district unless it changes its policy.

The move came just two weeks after the district announced that 50 copies of the intelligent design text would be included in biology classes as a reference text only.

— Reach Heidi Bernhard-Bubb at 854-1575 or news@yorkdispatch.com.

LOAD-DATE: March 26, 2005

170 of 179 DOCUMENTS

Copyright 2004
The York Dispatch (York, PA)

November 3, 2004 Wednesday

SECTION: LOCAL NEWS

LENGTH: 521 words

HEADLINE: Dover allowed to keep tapes from the public

BYLINE: HEIDI BERNHARD-BUBB *For The York Dispatch*

BODY:

The Dover Area School Board is on solid legal footing in its decision to keep audio recordings of the Oct. 18 school board meeting from the public.

Teri Henning, spokeswoman for the Pennsylvania Newspaper Association, said yesterday that the 1996 Pennsylvania Commonwealth Court of Common Pleas case *Tapco Inc. v. Township of Neville* established that audio recordings of public meetings are not considered public records and do not have to be disclosed to the public under the Right to Know Law.

However, Henning added that just because the board is within its legal rights to keep the tapes from the public, that doesn't mean they should.

"They should let the public hear the tapes; they are from a public meeting and it promotes public confidence in the board," Henning said.

Several residents had asked to listen to the tapes in the days after the meeting and were denied access by the board. At the meeting in question, the board voted 6-3 to add **intelligent design** theory to the district's high school biology curriculum -- a move that prompted longtime board members Casey and Jeff Brown to quit in protest.

In addition, there were several heated exchanges between board members and residents present at the meeting.

Insults alleged: Board member Noel Wenrich stormed out during Monday's meeting after demanding an apology from fellow board member William Buckingham. Wenrich said he and residents in the audience had been personally attacked and insulted at the Oct. 18 meeting by Buckingham and the board.

The decision to include **intelligent design** in the biology curriculum could make Dover a national test case over what can be taught in public schools. Stakeholders on both sides of the argument are now watching to see what will happen, with opponents saying that they may sue the district unless it changes its policy.

The move to add **intelligent design** theory to the curriculum came just two weeks after the district announced that 50 copies of the **intelligent design** text "Of Pandas and People" would be included in biology classes as a reference text only. Superintendent Richard Nilsen said Monday that the district's attorney, Stock and Leader, had advised the board that the minutes of the meeting, prepared by the board secretary, are the official public record of the meeting, and the tapes are considered nonpublic.

Nilsen said the board's "past practice" was to allow the public to hear the tapes, but there is no official policy.

He added that the change in practice was the board's decision and he could not speak to why that decision had been made.

The York Dispatch (York, PA) November 3, 2004 Wednesday

The board was to vote Monday on allowing the public to listen to the recordings of the Oct. 18 meeting "under district supervision," but pulled the item from the agenda after seeking legal counsel.

Former board member Barrie Callahan and resident Bryan Rehm had both asked to hear the tapes and were upset by the board's refusal.

Rehm, who had to leave the Oct. 18 meeting before it was over, said the board was elected by the residents and the residents had a right to hear for themselves what was said at the meeting.

LOAD-DATE: March 26, 2005

Morals at the polls; Social issues were on many voters' minds on Election Day.;

JENNIFER GISH. York Daily Record. York, Pa.: Nov 5, 2004. pg. 1

Abstract (Document Summary)

[Melvin Kulbicki] said moral values also might have influenced voters in York County, where a recent decision by the Dover Area School Board to add a religion-based theory of evolution to the district's biology curriculum became a major political issue. The vote to add "intelligent design theory" to the biology curriculum ultimately led the three board members who voted against it to resign.

President [Bush]'s campaign stop in York also played on Yorkers' sense of morality. During the July rally at the York Expo Center, Bush pushed family values and religion, evoking cheers from the crowd of 9,000 supporters.

Nationally, Kulbicki said, the 11 states with referendums to ban same-sex marriage also had an influence on both voter turnout and the election results. The referendums, including one in the swing state of Ohio, might have brought more conservative Christians out to the polls.

Full Text (630 words)

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The Rev. Paul Boisvert heard the conversations among people worshiping at the First Assembly of God, so he isn't entirely surprised by what political analysts are saying days after the election about the role morals played at the polls.

As the election neared, the worship pastor at the Manchester Township church said his people talked about honesty and transparency, friendliness toward faith communities and the candidates' stances on abortion and the definition of marriage and as the major deciding factors for their votes in the presidential race.

The church, attended by a generationally and ethnically diverse group of about 500 worshipers each Sunday, even held a registration drive to encourage new voters.

Now he said he's pleased by what the pollsters have found nationwide.

"I was very encouraged and

hopeful that the country is moving in a positive, moral direction," Boisvert said.

Morality was the highest-ranking influencing factor at the polls, according to a CNN exit poll of more than 13,600 voters nationwide.

Of the 22 percent of voters listing moral values as their top issue, 60 percent voted for Bush and 18 percent voted for Kerry.

The votes went the other way on the second highest-ranking issue. Of the 20 percent who named the economy and jobs as their deciding factor, 80 percent voted for Kerry and 18 percent voted for Bush.

Though the hold moral issues had on voters shocked some prominent polling groups that predicted the war in Iraq and the economy would decide the election, a local professor said it was to be expected.

"I'd have been absolutely flabbergasted if that wasn't the case," said Melvin Kulbicki, professor of political science at York College. "We are a country where religion and morality is a deep part of our culture. That's how we frame our issues."

He said stem-cell research joined abortion and same-sex unions as sissue which tugged at Americans' senses of right and wrong.

Kulbicki said moral values also might have influenced voters in York County, where a recent decision by the Dover Area School Board to add a religion-based theory of evolution to the district's biology curriculum became a major political issue. The vote to add "intelligent design theory" to the biology curriculum ultimately led the three board members who voted against it to resign.

The debate in Dover was just one example of how political and religious life have intersected here.

President Bush's campaign stop in York also played on Yorkers' sense of morality. During the July rally at the York Expo Center, Bush pushed family values and religion, evoking cheers from the crowd of 9,000 supporters.

Nationally, Kulbicki said, the 11 states with referendums to ban same-sex marriage also had an influence on both voter turnout and the election results. The referendums, including one in the swing state of Ohio, might have brought more conservative Christians out to the polls.

On election night, television commentators quickly shifted analysis from the influence of the war in Iraq and the economy on voter turnout and election results to the role of evangelicals.

Boisvert said he thought it was interesting that commentators were using a softer term for a group typically referred to as right-wing conservatives. Perhaps, he said, evangelical Christians were starting to be seen as a legitimate voice.

Though the Catholic church made no attempts to endorse any candidates from the pulpit, the Rev. T. Ronald Haney said same-sex marriage and abortion likely played a big role in Catholic voters' decisions.

"Informally we often preach about abortion in the Catholic church and also caring for the children who have been born," said Haney, spokesman for the Harrisburg Diocese, which includes York. "We offer advice on voting your conscience on the moral issues."

MUG: Specter Clarifies earlier quotes. Page 7A

Credit: York Daily Record

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THE YORK DISPATCH, MONDAY, NOVEMBER 8,

FROM PAGE ONE

Creationism disclaimer trial opens in Ga.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

School district warning on evolution draws federal suit by ACLU, 6 parents

ATLANTA — School officials in suburban Cobb County go to court today to defend themselves against a lawsuit accusing the district of promoting religion by requiring that science textbooks warn students that evolution is "a theory, not a fact."

The trial in U.S. District Court, expected to last four days, is the result of a lawsuit arguing the disclaimer restricts the teaching of evolution, promotes the teaching of creationism and discriminates against particular religions.

County school officials said their warning, in the form of stickers inserted in science books, simply encourages students to keep an open mind.

The stickers read: "This textbook contains material on evolution. Evolution is a theory, not a fact, regarding the origin of living things. This material should be approached with an open mind, studied carefully and critically considered."

Education at issue: The lawsuit was filed by six parents and the Georgia chapter of the American Civil Liberties Union.

"I'm a strong advocate for the separation of church and state," said one of the parents, Jeffrey Selman. "I have no problem with anybody's religious beliefs. I just want an adequate educational system."

The school board adopted

taught in public schools along with evolution.

In April, U.S. District Judge Clarence Cooper refused to dismiss the lawsuit, saying the school district's disclaimers could have the effect of advancing or inhibiting religion.

The judge applied a test handed down by the U.S. Supreme Court in 1971. In order to have the lawsuit dismissed, the school board had to show that the disclaimer was adopted with a secular purpose, that its primary effect neither advances nor inhibits religion, and that it does not result in an excessive entanglement of government with religion.

Cooper said the school board satisfied him only on the first issue.

■ VFW

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Copyright 2004
The York Dispatch (York, PA)

November 17, 2004 Wednesday

SECTION: TOP STORIES

LENGTH: 262 words

HEADLINE: 13 apply for 4 Dover board seats

BYLINE: HEIDI BERNHARD-BUBB *For The York Dispatch*

BODY:

Thirteen candidates have applied to fill four vacant Dover Area school board seats. They'll be interviewed by board members starting at 6 p.m. tomorrow at North Salem Elementary School.

Noel Wenrich and Jane Cleaver vacated their seats at the beginning of October; both are moving out of the district. Jeff and Carol "Casey" Brown quit two weeks later in protest over the decision to require the teaching of **intelligent design** in the high school biology curriculum.

The board is expected to make the appointments at its reorganization meeting, Dec. 1.

The new appointees will serve for a one-year term, ending in 2005, but can run for election next year.

The new board members will be joining a district that has been mired in controversy over the 6-3 decision last month on **intelligent design**. Stakeholders on both sides say Dover may be the first school district in the nation to call for teaching **intelligent design** as an alternative theory to evolution.

Opponents, such as the Pennsylvania chapter of the American Civil Liberties Union and Americans United for Separation of Church and State, have said they may sue if the district does not change its policy.

The Browns, as well as several community members, have said they fear a lawsuit will be costly and embarrassing to the district.

However, the Thomas More Law Center, a law firm dedicated to defending the religious freedom of Christians and the sanctity of human life, has offered to represent the district free of charge.

-- Reach Heidi Bernhard-Bubb at 854-1575 or news@yorkdispatch.com.

LOAD-DATE: March 26, 2005

Evolution sticker a sticking point for Georgia district

■ Dover schools recently had similar heated discussions about the teaching of evolution.

'... There is a wealth of science that would support intelligent design, and that is not taught.'

■ MARJORIE ROGERS, COBB COUNTY, GA., PARENT WHO STARTED THE DRIVE TO PUT STICKERS IN BIOLOGY TEXTBOOKS

Staff and news service reports

ATLANTA — A trial opened Monday over whether a warning sticker in suburban Atlanta biology textbooks that says evolution is "a theory, not a fact" violates the separation of church and state by promoting religion.

The case is one of several battles that have been waged in recent years in the Bible Belt over what role evolution should play in science books.

In Dover last month, the Dover Area School Board voted to add "Intelligent Design Theory" to the district's biology curriculum. The change passed by a 6-3 margin after a heated discussion by the board and a dozen members of the community.

The new wording in the curriculum states: "Students will be made aware of gaps/problems in Darwin's Theory and of other theories of evolution including, but not limited to, intelligent design. Note: Origins of life will not be taught."

Voting to approve the final version were William Buckingham, Alan Bonsell, Sheila Harkins, Heather Geasey, Jane Cleaver and Angie Yingling. Voting against it were Wenrich, Carol Brown and Jeff Brown.

Cobb County schools in Georgia put the disclaimers in biology texts two years ago after more than 2,000 parents complained the books presented evolution as fact without mentioning rival ideas about the origin of life, namely creationism.

A group of parents and the American Civil Liberties Union then filed a lawsuit over the stickers. "It's like saying everything that follows this sticker isn't true," said Jeffrey Seiman, a parent who filed the lawsuit.

The sticker reads, "This text-

book contains material on evolution. Evolution is a theory, not a fact, regarding the origin of living things. This material should be approached with an open mind, studied carefully and critically considered."

A lawyer for the school district, Linwood Gunn, said the sticker was meant to "encourage critical thinking" and said it did not imply that evolution was wrong. Gunn said it was silly to consider the stickers a promotion of religion.

"It doesn't say anything about faith. It doesn't say anything about religion," he said.

But U.S. District Judge Clarence Cooper asked Gunn why it is necessary to have a sticker clarify evolution as a theory. "Why put a sticker on the book when that's already in the book?"

Gunn replied that school board members were simply trying to accommodate all views.

The first witness, parent Marjorie Rogers, started the drive to put the stickers in the books. She said it was only fair to put a small disclaimer in a textbook where religious-based ideas about the origin of life are not mentioned.

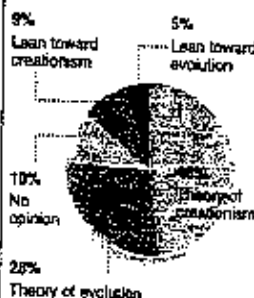
"I don't want the Bible taught in the classroom. But there is a wealth of science that would support intelligent design, and that is not taught," she said. "There should be a marketplace of ideas."

The judge also heard from a science teacher who said some students point to the sticker and argue evolution is "just a theory." The sticker "diminishes the status of evolution among all other theories," said teacher Wes McCoy. "I was worried, I didn't want college admission

God or science

Several battles have been waged over what role evolution should play in science books, the latest being whether a sticker saying evolution is "a theory, not a fact" in suburban Atlanta textbooks violates the separation of church and state.

Americans asked if they leaned more toward evolution or creationism



NOTE: Results are based on telephone interviews with 1,016 adults age 18 and older, conducted Feb. 19-21, 2001, with a +/-3 percentage point margin of error.

SOURCE: Gallup Poll News Service

ASSOCIATED PRESS

counselors thinking less of their science educations, thinking they hadn't been taught evolution or something."

The U.S. Supreme Court ruled in 1987 that creationism was a religious belief that could not be taught in public schools along with evolution.

The theory of evolution says evidence shows current species of life evolved over time from earlier forms and that natural selection determines which species survive. Creationism credits the origin of species to God.

The trial, which will be decided by the judge, is expected to last several days.

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York Daily Record 11/9/04

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Seven vie for open slots on Dover school board

Two of the four available seats are directly related to the intelligent design issue.

By JOSEPH MALDONADO
For the Daily Record/Sunday News
Thursday, November 18, 2004

In a list provided by the Dover Area School District last week, seven district residents have their eyes on four vacant school board seats.

The board will interview candidates to fill the void left by those who recently resigned at 6 tonight at North Salem Elementary School.

In addition to serving students, one of the applicants, Bryan Rehm, said he wants to restore civility and accountability to the board.

He's irritated by the hostility the board members show one another, and more than that, disturbed at the lack of respect the board shows toward district faculty and taxpayers.

"I'm also unhappy with many of their policy decisions," he said. "In particular, I think it's wrong to be teaching (intelligent design theory) in a science class. I think this is going to turn into an expensive court issue that is unnecessary."

Two of the four available seats are directly related to the intelligent design issue. Carol and Jeffrey Brown resigned in protest over the Oct. 18 curriculum changes that mandated the theory be taught in ninth-grade biology.

Rehm said he is not against intelligent design being made available to students at the high school, but said it would be taught more appropriately in a philosophy or comparative religions-type class.

He was also angry that the board voted to destroy the recorded comments from that October meeting even after members of the faculty and community requested to hear them.

The two other seats opened when Noel Wenrich and Jane Cleaver announced their resignation in October for personal reasons.

Rehm said it was the height of hypocrisy when in February of this year, the board failed to accept the resignation offered by board member William Buckingham after his public announcement that he was addicted to the prescription drug, OxyContin.

"We suspend students for drug problems like that, but the board kept Buckingham," he said. "Go figure."

Even though he has very strong feelings about how the school board could have done things better over the past couple of years, he still expects fair consideration for a board seat. If he isn't chosen tonight, Rehm said he will run for formal election in 2005.

Bernadette Reinking, another candidate, said the recent controversies have created peripheral distractions away from things directly relating to education.

"We need to put the focus back where it belongs," the retired nurse said. "On students."

Right now, she said she isn't sure if the board is really paying attention to the opinions of the community. If elected, she said she would encourage the board to establish focus groups involving members of the community.

"We've been through so much that I think we need to at least get an idea of what the community is thinking," she said.

Michael Arnold, Cynthia Corbett, Terry Emig, Sherrie Leber and Monica Marlowe are also vying for the seats on the board. Efforts to reach these candidates for an interview were unsuccessful.

Though the meeting tonight is open to the public, Supt. Richard Nilsen said people will not be able to ask the candidates any questions.

"The board will ask all the questions and make the decision on their own," he said.

Dover legal battle brews

Both sides of the intelligent design debate are in touch with lawyers.

By LAURIE LEBOW
Daily Record/Sunday News
Thursday, November 18, 2004

A group of people from the Dover Area School District have contacted the American Civil Liberties Union regarding their concern about the district's plan to have intelligent design taught in high school biology classes.

Witold Walczak, legal director of Pennsylvania ACLU, said "a large number of people" with legal standing have retained the services of the civil rights organization.

He would not reveal the identity of the ACLU clients, but said they represent people of all ages and backgrounds.

In response, Walczak said the ACLU is reviewing the Dover case and has put together a legal team, including Americans United for Separation of Church and State and the law firm of Pepper Hamilton, which has offices in Philadelphia and Harrisburg.

"We are concluding our factual investigation and legal research and then we will make a decision on what to do next," he said.

While Walczak would not discuss the possibility of filing suit against the district, the ACLU has said previously that it would consider it.

Last month, the Dover Area School Board voted 6-3 to overhaul its science curriculum. In addition to the teaching of evolution, it now also requires the teaching of intelligent design, the idea that life is too complex to have occurred without a divine creator.

Critics say intelligent design is biblical creationism in disguise. Its supporters say it provides an alternative argument to evolution.

The school board vote came two weeks after an anonymous group of residents donated 50 copies of the pro-intelligent design book "Of Pandas and People," to be used as reference materials.

School board member Bill Buckingham is the chief architect of Dover's new biology curriculum that states, "Students will be made aware of gaps/problems in Darwin's Theory and of other theories of evolution including, but not limited to, intelligent design. Note: Origins of life will not be taught."

Walczak said the curriculum revision as worded is confusing.

"It remains unclear to us how the district plans to implement this policy," he said. "We have communicated with the district's solicitor's office, but it still remains unclear as to their intentions."

Buckingham has said he has been talking to the conservative Ann Arbor-based Thomas More Law Center, which is interested in defending an intelligent design legal challenge.

The law firm champions such issues as school prayer and "promoting public morality."

But Buckingham has said those on the other side of the debate are also interested in a battle on the issue as well.

While Dover is believed to be the first school district in the country to actually require the teaching of intelligent design, the issue of evolution has been heating up in other areas of the country as well.

In Georgia, the ACLU is fighting a suburban Atlanta district's decision to include a warning sticker in biology textbooks that says evolution is "a theory, not a fact."

Cobb County schools in Georgia put the disclaimers in biology texts after more than 2,000 parents complained the books presented evolution as fact without mentioning other ideas about the origin of life such as creationism.

But another group of parents are embroiled in a lawsuit over the stickers, which read, "This textbook contains material on evolution. Evolution is a theory, not a fact, regarding the origin of living things. This material should be approached with an open mind, studied carefully and critically considered."

Also last month, a Wisconsin school district 60 miles northeast of Minneapolis revised its science curriculum

policy to read: "When theories of origin are taught, students will study various scientific models or theories of origin and identify the scientific data supporting each."

In addition to Buckingham, voting to approve the final curriculum change in Dover were Alan Bonsell, Sheila Harkins, Heather Geesey, Jane Cleaver and Angie Yingling. Voting against it were Noel Wenrich, Carol Brown and Jeff Brown.

Reach Lauri Lebo at 771-2092 or llebo@ydr.com.

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Copyright 2004
The York Dispatch (York, PA)

November 19, 2004 Friday

SECTION: TOP STORIES

LENGTH: 364 words

HEADLINE: 'Nightline' produces show

BYLINE: By HEIDI BERNHARD-BUBB, *For The York Dispatch*

BODY:

The national spotlight continued to shine on the Dover School District last night as a crew from the ABC show "Nightline" taped the proceedings.

Staffers have been interviewing all of the major players on the issue, although the producers have not said when the segment will air.

What's behind the spotlight is that Dover may be the first school district in the nation to call for teaching intelligent design in its high school biology curriculum as an alternative theory to evolution.

Intelligent design is a theory that says the universe, and life, are best explained by an intelligent cause, not an undirected process such as natural selection.

Eyes on decisions: Stakeholders on both sides of the issue are now watching closely to see what will happen.

Opponents, such as the Pennsylvania chapter of the American Civil Liberties Union and Americans United for Separation of Church and State, have criticized the decision, saying it is a thinly veiled attempt to bring religion into public schools.

Both organizations have said they may sue --and free legal aid in defense of the curriculum has been offered by the Thomas More Law Center, a law firm dedicated to defending the religious freedom of Christians and the sanctity of human life.

Although the school board has been quiet on the issue since taking its stand six weeks ago, board member William Buckingham said last night that the district had been misrepresented and that people didn't understand what the board had done.

Buckingham argued that teaching intelligent design does not violate the separation of church and state because it does not talk about one specific God.

And fellow board member Angie Zeigler-Yingling may be one of the Dover residents confused about the meaning of the board's decision.

Zeigler-Yingling voted for the curriculum change, but said earlier this week that she is completely against teaching religion in the schools and does not want to be involved in a lawsuit.

And she said she was afraid to express opposition to intelligent design because she didn't want to be seen as an atheist.

She said she wants to be clear that she has "very strong faith."

The York Dispatch (York, PA) November 19, 2004 Friday

LOAD-DATE: March 26, 2005

164 of 179 DOCUMENTS

Copyright 2004
The York Dispatch (York, PA)

November 19, 2004 Friday

SECTION: TOP STORIES

LENGTH: 677 words

HEADLINE: Four get seats in Dover

BYLINE: HEIDI BERNHARD-BUBB *For The York Dispatch*

BODY:

After two board members quit to move away, and two others quit in a dispute over teaching intelligent design in the biology curriculum, the Dover Area school board selected four new members last night.

Sherrie Leber, Ronald Short, the Rev. Edward Rowand and Eric Riddle were chosen from among 13 candidates, and will be sworn in at the board's Dec. 1 reorganization meeting.

All will serve a one-year term, but can run for election next year when there are three two-year terms and four four-year seats on the ballot.

The current board interviewed candidates on four major issues:

- being fiscally conservative;
- withstanding attacks and misrepresentation from what board member William Buckingham said was a "vocal minority in the community and left-wing media,"
- standing up for an unpopular issue that the board feels is right;
- and being a team player who won't quit if a vote doesn't go their way.

The last two questions were apparently directed at the actions of former board members Jeff and Casey Brown, who quit last month in protest over the board's decision to require the teaching of intelligent design in the high school biology curriculum.

Board members didn't refer directly to the issue, although several members asked questions about candidates' opinions on recent board actions, the "current controversy" in the district, and being courageous in the face of opposition.

Two supporters: However, two of the candidates selected, Short and Riddle, have been vocal supporters of the board's decision.

Riddle, a superintendent at a stone quarry, has said at several previous board meetings that he is proud the board took a stand on the issue.

He has also said that the lack of morality in public schools is part of the reason he and his wife home school his 8-year-old son and 5-year-old daughter.

Short is a Harley-Davidson employee who has a daughter in Dover schools and another who has graduated from them. He's also stood up at meetings to back the board's decisions.

The York Dispatch (York, PA) November 19, 2004 Friday

Rowand, pastor at Rohler's Assembly of God pastor, commended the board's stance during his interview.

"Important decisions are not always popular, but you weren't elected to be popular," he said.

Rowand also said he believed it was his responsibility to teach his children about the origins of life and the Bible -- not that of school educators. [His son is one of the two high school representatives to the school board.]

However, despite his personal beliefs, Rowand said he had no agenda and believed it would be his job to support rather than criticize the board.

Sherric Leber said she also had no agenda and was not seeking appointment to the board because of the recent controversy.

A cost manager at Danskin Inc., mother of a district student and a former youth cheerleading coach, she added she had no real opinion on the issue and wanted more information, but she hoped to bring a new, objective opinion to the board.

Foes will run: Several candidates who weren't chosen disagreed sharply with Buckingham, who has been a prime proponent of including **intelligent design** in the curriculum.

Candidates Terry Emig, Monica Marlowe, Bryan Rehm and Bernadette Reinking, who all were open in their opposition to the board's **intelligent design** decision during the interviews, said they will definitely be running for election next year.

Rehm, a high school physics teacher who previously worked at Dover High, read a prepared statement that questioned the decision to teach "a perfectly valid faith" as a science.

The four candidates may join former school board member Jeff Brown next year in a fight for the seven board seats up for election next year.

What's open: The seven seats up for election include the four vacated by the Browns and Noel Wenrich and Jane Cleaver, who moved away; and the seats of current board president Alan Bonsell, and members Sheila Harkins and Zeigler-Yingling.

Zeigler-Yingling said she has not decided whether she will seek re-election. Bonsell and Harkins have not commented.

LOAD-DATE: March 26, 2005

Candidates chosen for school board

The Dover Area School Board interviewed 13 candidates to fill open seats.

By JOSEPH MALDONADO
For the Daily Record/Sunday News
Friday, November 19, 2004

As former Dover Area School Board member Carol "Casey" Brown watched the 13 candidates interview for four vacant board seats Thursday night, she did so with a hope.

She hoped that when the new board members were chosen, they would bring a greater balance of opinion on issues, such as the recent decision to allow "intelligent design" to be taught in ninth-grade biology.

Instead, she said, taxpayers got a preacher, a home-schooler who doesn't send his kids to public school because of his religious beliefs and two others with barely any experience in government.

"I don't think the choices made tonight serve the students or the taxpayers," she said.

The four who were chosen were Edward Rowand, pastor at Rohler's Assembly of God Church in Dover; Eric Riddle, the home-school parent; Ronald Short; and Sherrie Leber.

Leber is an insurance agent who is also involved at Shiloh United Church of Christ, among other things. During his interview, Short was asked by board president Alan Bonsell if he felt he could stand up and fight over the current controversy if he felt it was the right thing to do.

Short said he would be outspoken and understood that some people would be unhappy with the result.

"But I will bear it," he said.

While on one five-minute break between interviews, Buckingham said the board couldn't legally come right out and ask about opinions on intelligent design without looking as though they had a litmus test working for choosing new members.

"But we can ask general questions and to see what they offer up and evaluate from there," he said.

No one who adamantly spoke out against intelligent design was selected. One of those candidates was Bryan Rehm.

"It is a great disservice and fallacy to teach students that a perfectly valid faith constitutes scientific knowledge," he told the board during his interview.

He said the board must allow the curriculum to be developed by the professional educators with expertise in state standards. Rehm said he was speaking from experience. In his resume to the board, he listed himself as a physics teacher with seven years of experience, four of which included writing science curriculum.

The Eagle Scout also listed several educational awards and grants he has received to assist him in his classrooms.

On a break during interviews, Rehm said he found the questions the board was asking interesting. Like Buckingham's question, when he asked potential candidates if they will be able to stand up to the left-wing, liberal media when they inevitably misquote and misrepresent them.

"Those types of questions have nothing to do with the issues facing our students," Rehm said. "Too much of this has been fluff questions with fluff answers."

Rehm vowed to run formally for a spot on the school board next year.

After the meeting, district secretary Peg Funkhouser said she was disappointed that the board did not select Rehm.

"He was clearly one of the most qualified," she said.

Resident Sheri Greenfield agreed.

"He touched a nerve during the interview," she said. "You could tell when it happened because the interviewers got heated and turned personal."

Buckingham said he was very happy with the choices the board made. While some of the candidates suggested that the board revisit and reconsider the choice it made to include intelligent design in the curriculum, Buckingham said that isn't going to happen.

"It's a battle," he said. "I never enter any battle with the intention of losing."

CANDIDATES

Board candidates:

- Michael Arnold
- Cynthia Corbett
- Terry Emig
- Sherrie Leber
- Monica Marlowe
- Bryan Rehm
- Bernadette Reinking
- Jan Snyder
- Angela Wisner
- Robert Stern
- Ronald Short
- Edward Rowand
- Eric Riddle

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York Dispatch

Dover opts for referral School board compromises

By HEIDI BERNHARD-BUBB *For The York Dispatch*

Monday, November 22, 2004 -

Dover Area School officials have now spelled out how alternatives to evolution theory -- including intelligent design -- will be addressed in the curriculum.

Their decision, which board members say has been misunderstood and misinterpreted by critics, will mainly mean reading a statement to students about alternatives to evolution theory.

The statement explains intelligent design in a sentence, and refers students to the book "Of Pandas and People" if they want to learn more about it.

Superintendent Richard Nilsen said teachers won't be required to teach intelligent design, which is a theory that says the universe, and life, are best explained by an Intelligent cause, not an undirected process such as natural selection.

"Teachers will make students aware of the theory of intelligent design, but no lectures will be prepared on the theory; it can be mentioned without teaching it," he said.

He said the district won't be teaching religion and that no religious texts will be brought into the classroom, such as the Bible or the Koran.

Board president Alan Bonsell said that he believes the board's decision has been blown out of proportion.

"We have to teach evolution, that is the state science standards. We are only trying to make students aware of the other side of the story," Bonsell said.

Bonsell said the board as a whole has been silent about the issue because it was working with district administrators, district solicitor Stock and Leader, and teachers to come up with the statement released Friday.

He said the teachers were instrumental in writing the statement and everyone has signed off on it.

Bertha Spahr, chairwoman of the high school science department, could not be reached for comment.

However, former board member Jeff Brown, who quit over the curriculum change, said several teachers objected to the wording of the curriculum change approved by the board last month. He said they interpreted it as requiring them to teach intelligent design.

He said the teachers' objections was one of the reasons he decided to quit.

The latest statement addresses how the district will implement intelligent design into the curriculum with a procedural statement that will be read to students.

It also says, "School districts are places for inquiry and critical discussions...the Dover Area School District's Biology Curriculum is only providing that opportunity for open critical discussions -- the real heart of the scientific practice. Assistant superintendent Michael Baksa and Dr. Nilsen will monitor the instruction to make sure no one is promoting but also not inhibiting religion."

Bonsell said the statement is an attempt to diffuse some of the controversy prompted by the move to add intelligent design to the curriculum, a move which has gained national attention.

What's behind the controversy is that Dover may be the first school district in the nation to call for teaching intelligent design as an alternative theory to evolution.

The decision prompted longtime board members Jeff and Casey Brown to quit in protest and opponents, such as the Pennsylvania chapter of the American Civil Liberties Union and Americans United for Separation of Church and State, have said they may sue the district if it does not change its policy.

Bonsell said he believes that intelligent design is a legitimate scientific theory that can be presented as an alternative to evolution without promoting religion.

He said he believes it will give the students of Dover a better education by giving them more than one theory.

He also said he has no desire to be a "test case" and does not want the district to be embroiled in a lawsuit.

However, critics say that the statement issued Friday doesn't change their position at all.

Rob Boston, spokesman for Americans United, said that "this statement indicates that the Dover School Board remains bound and determined to undercut the teaching of evolution in the school district and introduce religiously based theories of origins of life into the classroom. It does nothing to clear up this matter and in fact only makes the matter worse."

Boston, and other critics, such as Eugenie Scott, director of the California-based National Center for Science Education, an organization that has defended the teaching of evolution for the past 30 years, say that intelligent design is a secularized way of teaching creationism and creation science, which is based on Biblical accounts of creation.

"This is basically a backdoor way of saying God did it, not evolution," Scott said last month.

She added that the vast majority of the scientific community dismisses it as "bad science" because it provides no testable explanations or evidence.

Scott also said that forcing teachers to bring intelligent design into the classroom, even just mentioning it, is the same as requiring teachers to teach the theory.

The statements

The Dover Area School Board last month voted 6-3 to change to add the following wording to the high school biology curriculum:

"Students will be made aware of gaps/problems in Darwin's Theory and of other theories of evolution including, but not limited to Intelligent Design. The Origins of Life is not taught."

On Friday, the district administration and school board released a statement to clarify its position. The following will be read to all biology students:

"The state standards require students to learn about Darwin's Theory of Evolution and to eventually take a standardized test of which evolution is a part. Because Darwin's Theory is a theory, it is still being tested as new evidence is discovered. The Theory is not a fact. Gaps in the Theory exist for which there is no evidence. A theory is defined as a well-tested explanation that unifies a broad range of observations.

"Intelligent Design is an explanation of the origin of life that differs from Darwin's view. The reference book 'Of Pandas and People,' is available for students to see if they would like to explore this view in an effort to gain an understanding of what Intelligent Design actually involves. As is true with any theory,

students are encouraged to keep an open mind.

"The school leaves the discussion of the Origins of Life up to individual students and their families. As a standards-driven district, class instruction focuses on the standards and preparing students to be successful on standards-based assessments."

Dover Area in spotlight

First Amendment organizations are lining up to protest district biology curriculum.

By LAURI LEBOW
Daily Record/Sunday News
Tuesday, November 23, 2004

It's not just a Dover issue.

Seemingly, it's caught the attention of everybody.

Both Sunday's The New York Times and The Philadelphia Inquirer ran stories on the issue.

MSNBC has been following it, and on Friday, National Public Radio ran a segment about it on its "Talk of the Nation" program.

Both scientists and civil-rights organizations across the country say they are closely following it.

When the Dover Area School Board voted in October to incorporate the concept of intelligent design into its high school biology class, it reinvigorated a debate still waging from the 1925 Scopes Monkey Trial.

School board member Bill Buckingham, the chief architect of the curriculum change, says the requirement doesn't violate the First Amendment clause prohibiting the separation of church and state.

But civil rights organizations are lining up to disagree.

In addition to the teaching of evolution, the school district also requires the teaching of intelligent design, the idea that life is too complex to have occurred randomly — or through Darwin's theory of natural selection — and therefore must have been made at the hand of a divine creator.

Critics say intelligent design is biblical creationism in disguise. Its supporters say it provides an alternative argument to evolution.

With the American Civil Liberties Union and the Americans United for Separation of Church and State mulling lawsuits against the district, the Anti-Defamation League has also weighed in on the issue.

In a letter sent to the Dover Area administration, the organization urged the district to reconsider the school board decision.

Barry Morrison, regional director of the league's Philadelphia office, wrote: "... it is both unfair and unconstitutional to try to manipulate the character of society by espousing your own religious beliefs in public schools ... The teacher's desk may not serve as a pulpit for religious doctrine."

The Nov. 2 letter was addressed to Dover Area Supt. Richard Nilsen, and he has not responded, Morrison said.

In addition, Nilsen also refuses to comment on the issue to the media.

Morrison said if the ACLU files a lawsuit, the Anti-Defamation League might submit briefs in support.

"We have been talking with the ACLU," Morrison said. "It's possible we may play a role in that."

Last week, Witold Walczak, legal director of Pennsylvania ACLU, said a large number of people with legal standing had retained the services of the civil rights organization in the matter.

While Walczak will not reveal the identity of the clients, he said they represent people of all ages and backgrounds.

The ACLU has also put together a legal team, including Americans United for Separation of Church and State and the law firm of Pepper Hamilton, which has offices in Philadelphia and Harrisburg.

Morrison said the idea that one theory is as relevant as the other is incorrect and unfair to students.

"The school board should look to noted authorities in science, not in religion class," he said.

Reach Lauri Lebo at 771-2092 or llebo@ydr.com.

THE POLICY

On Friday, the Dover Area School District spelled out its teaching requirements on evolution and intelligent design, which go into effect immediately, in a prepared statement:

"The state standards require students to learn about Darwin's Theory of Evolution and to eventually take a standardized test of which evolution is part.

Because Darwin's Theory is a theory, it is still being tested as new evidence is discovered. The theory is not a fact. Gaps in the theory exist for which there is no evidence. A theory is defined as a well-tested explanation that unifies a broad range of observations.

Intelligent Design is an explanation of the origin of life that differs from Darwin's view. The reference book, *Of Pandas and People*, is available for students to see if they would like to explore this view in an effort to gain an understanding of what Intelligent Design actually involves. As is true with any theory, students are encouraged to keep an open mind.

The school leaves the discussion of the Origins of Life up to individual students and their families. As a standards-driven district, class instruction focuses on the standards and preparing students to be successful on standards-based assessments."

The administration will not comment on the issue, but according to a statement released by the district, both Assistant Supt. Michael Baksa and Supt. Richard Nilsen will "monitor the instruction to make sure no one is promoting, but also not inhibiting religion."

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THE POLICY

York Daily Record, York, Pa.: Nov 23, 2004, pg. 1/08

Abstract (Document Summary)

Because Darwin's Theory is a theory, it is still being tested as new evidence is discovered. The theory is not a fact. Gaps in the theory exist for which there is no evidence. A theory is defined as a well-tested explanation that unifies a broad range of observations.

Full Text (243 words)

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On Friday, the Dover Area School District spelled out its teaching requirements on evolution and intelligent design, which go into effect immediately, in a prepared statement:

"The state standards require students to learn about Darwin's Theory of Evolution and to eventually take a standardized test of which evolution is part.

Because Darwin's Theory is a theory, it is still being tested as new evidence is discovered. The theory is not a fact. Gaps in the theory exist for which there is no evidence. A theory is defined as a well-tested explanation that unifies a broad range of observations.

Intelligent Design is an explanation of the origin of life that differs from Darwin's view. The reference book, *Of Pandas and People*, is available for students to see if they would like to explore this view in an effort to gain an understanding of what Intelligent Design actually involves. As is true with any theory, students are encouraged to keep an open mind.

The school leaves the discussion of the Origins of Life up to individual students and their families. As a standards-driven district, class instruction focuses on the standards and preparing students to be successful on standards-based assessments."

The administration will not comment on the issue, but according to a statement released by the district, both Assistant Supt. Michael Baksa and Supt. Richard Nilsen will "monitor the instruction to make sure no one is promoting, but also not inhibiting religion."

Credit: York Daily Record

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Objections by design; ; Couple's stand in evolution debate has them in the spotlight

LAURI LEBOWITZ. York Daily Record. York, Pa.: Nov 28, 2004. pg. 1/06

Abstract (Document Summary)

Their departure left two vacancies on the board, which, to the Browns' vocal dismay, appears to have been filled by replacements sympathetic to the teaching of intelligent design.

[Noel Wenrich] would like to see the students be aware of what he believes are gaps in Darwinism, but, by requiring the teaching of intelligent design, he believes the district is now set up for a lawsuit. He agreed with the Browns that some board members have been cut out of the discussions in the past several months.

The Browns think what is happening in Dover is a precursor to what will soon be happening across the country, as religious conservatives become more vocal.

Full Text (1767 words)

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Jeff Brown was at the Route 74 Restaurant having coffee with the locals, when his cell phone rang.

The former Dover Area School Board member hadn't yet shaved that day, and he was wearing an old flannel shirt.

But he wasn't going to have time to clean up. A camera crew with ABC's NightLine was already on its way.

That's the way it's been going lately.

Since Brown and his wife, Carol "Casey" Brown, quit the Dover Area School Board in protest of their peers' decision to require the teaching of intelligent design in high-school biology classes, the couple has been barely able to keep up with the media attention.

The couple has been both criticized and praised by people on both sides of the issue.

Their departure left two vacancies on the board, which, to the Browns' vocal dismay, appears to have been filled by replacements sympathetic to the teaching of intelligent design.

And now the couple is at the center of a debate that may be playing out in Dover's classrooms, but is being watched across the country and the world.

So far, the Browns have been contacted by the San Francisco Chronicle, The Philadelphia Inquirer, Fox News, a reporter from a German newspaper and a Syracuse University student working on a class paper.

"Eighteen and counting," Casey said of the number of interviews she and her husband have given so far.

Matters of faith

She is a 57-year-old stay-at-home grandmother. He is a 54-year-old self-employed electrician.

She is an Episcopalian. He's a member of the United Church of Christ and teaches Sunday school.

In her resignation speech, she said she would pray for the other board members "pray that you will find the

wisdom to separate your personal beliefs and desires from the proper fulfillment, within the law, of the duties and responsibilities of your office."

But on more than one occasion since the intelligent design debate began in June, she says she has been asked if she is "born again" because of her opposition.

Despite, or perhaps, they say, because of their strong Christian beliefs, they remain staunch advocates of the separation of church and state.

Which is why they say they opposed the change to the science curriculum to require the teaching of intelligent design the idea that life is too complex to have occurred randomly and therefore must have been created by a divine being.

Intelligent design's supporters say it is simply about giving time to evolution's alternative views. But its critics, such as the Browns, say it's merely a slicked up version of creationism.

"What I think isn't relevant," Jeff said. "I can believe the sun rides across the sky every day on the back of the giant turtle. But if I want to call it science, I have to produce the turtle."

His wife said, "The last time we mixed religion and politics, people got burned at the stake."

Response

At first, Jeff wasn't overly concerned about the issue.

He had been hearing school board members talk about intelligent design for several years. At the time, he interpreted it as simply a philosophical alternative to the idea that life was created when "lightning struck the primeval ooze.

"I didn't view this as a buzz- word for creationism," he said.

Then board members began talking about adding it to the curriculum.

"I had no problem with that, but, of course, I hadn't read the fine print," he said.

It wasn't until he read "Pandas and People," the book promoting the concept of intelligent design currently being used as a supplemental textbook at Dover high school, that he became concerned.

He interpreted the book as saying, "I'm apparently an atheist because I don't believe in their particular version of the origins of life."

Still, even if he believed every word of the book, he wouldn't have supported the curriculum change.

"We're charging our volunteers for criminal background checks," he said. "Then we turn around and commit the district for an incalculable amount of money in a lawsuit."

Should school district residents file a lawsuit against Dover over the issue as is expected and the district loses, it could end up paying the legal fees of the plaintiffs.

Jeff said he hopes his fears are unfounded and that he will not end up being able to tell his critics, "I told you so."

"I hope they don't sue us, I really do," he said. But he isn't holding out much hope.